

DisabilityNOW

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Poster clash

Disability campaigners have slated a new disability awareness campaign just launched by the Government.

The three-year campaign, which will cost £6m, was launched in June by Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett. It is aimed at raising awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) to be set up next spring.

The campaign will try to combat prejudice. For instance, poster adverts featuring disabled people will encourage the public to "see the person".

Mr Blunkett said: "Our campaign is about raising awareness of the contribution that people with disabilities can and do make at all levels of society."

But disabled groups, such as the umbrella organisation the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP), object to the way disability is portrayed in the poster campaign. They

argue that responsibility for fighting prejudice lies with the Government not the public.

Bob Williams-Findlay, acting chair of BCODP, said: "We will not let Labour pass the buck, which is what their 'see the person' campaign does. Outlawing discrimination is their job, not ours or yours."

Richard Wood, BCODP's



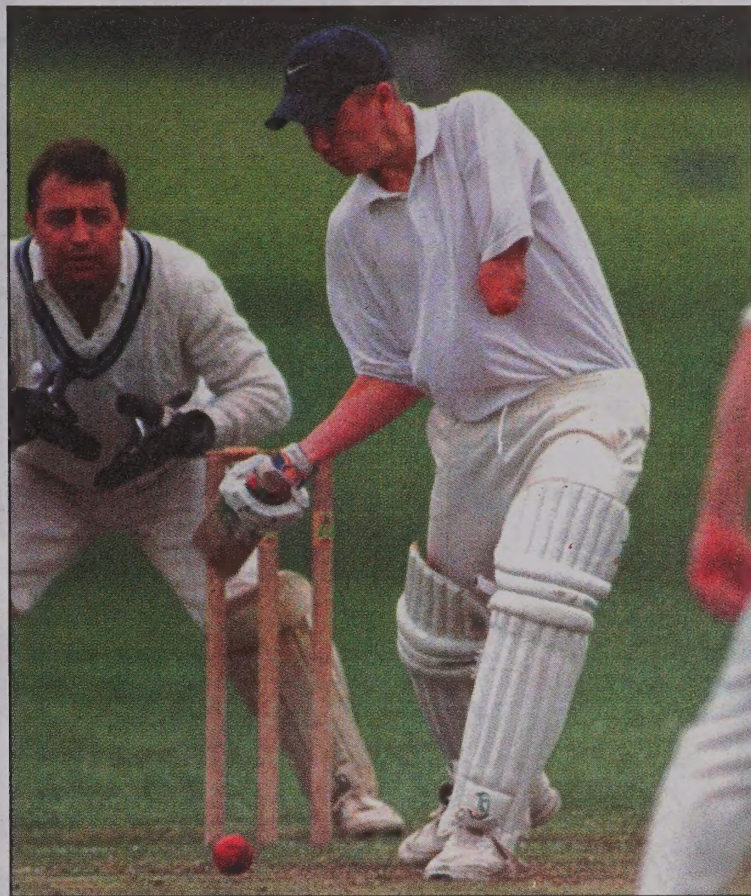
Controversial campaign poster

chief executive, said his organisation had refused to take part in the campaign because the Government had insisted it would not be altered.

Rachel Hurst, chair of the campaigning group Rights Now, argued that by focusing on individuals the adverts ignore the discrimination of society as a whole. She said: "Don't look at disabled people – we have got nothing to do with it. It's out there that the trouble is."

According to Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge, Government policy combines education and legislation: "We have an ambitious spending and legislative programme, but we need to challenge preconceptions."

If you have an opinion on the posters, let DN know (see page 3 for our address).



Rising star: Dan Holder is the first one-armed player in Britain to play for his county. Dan, from Cheltenham, has been selected for the Gloucestershire under-16 squad. Now 16, Dan was born with his left arm missing below the elbow. He says this is no hindrance for bowling and fielding, but the bat can fly out of his hand. To solve the problem, he designed a special fibreglass socket. "I have 100 per cent commitment to becoming a professional," Dan said, "and maybe people will realise you don't have to be disabled just because you have a disability."

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Doing the honours

Services to disabled people were recognised in the Queen's birthday honours list published in June.

CBE recipients included Gerry Acher, senior partner KPMG London and vice chairman of Motability; David Grayson, chairman of the National Disability Council; David Heywood, chair of Remploy; and Ruth Lister, professor of social policy at Loughborough University.

OBEs included Colin Williams, director of Carers Support, John Michael Leal Uren, for services to the Royal London Society for the Blind, and Patricia Lesley Stewart, a headteacher in the Wirral, for her services to special needs education.

Among the recipients of MBEs were Terry Baker, Disabled Drivers' Association in Swansea, and Judith Figures, for services to Sailing for Disabled People.

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EDITORIAL**Editor** Mary Wilkinson**Assistant Editor**

Sally Brown

Reporter Rod Hermeston**Layout sub** Laura Strong**Editorial/Administrative****Assistant** Dan Batten**Production Editor**

Damien Vessey

Scope, 6 Market Road

London N7 9PW

Editorial: 0171-619 7323

Fax: 0171-619 7331

Minicom: 0171-619 7332

E-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk**Regular contributors**

Paul Darke, Ann Darnbrough,

Tanni Grey-Thompson,

David Griffiths, Marigold Hope,

Adam Reynolds, Rebecca

Reynolds, Marion Stanton,

Michael Turner

ADVERTISING**Advertising Manager**

Richard Gresham

Tel: 0171-619 7336

Fax: 0171-619 7331

CIRCULATION**Marketing/Circulation****Manager** Judith Reid**Sales/Marketing Executive**

Patrick Durham-Matthews

Circulation Assistant

Melanie Mangham

Tel: 0171-619 7317

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Dancing queen: Lucy Willers from Aveley in Essex is the first child in 106 years to pass a special needs grade two Certificate of Performance for Dance. Six-year-old Lucy, who has cerebral palsy, completed a programme of movement in a combination of wheelchair and walking frame. She trained for the certificate at Belinda's School of Dance in Aveley, where she is the only pupil with a disability. Lucy's mum Julie Willers said: "She loves dancing and she definitely has more control now. The next goal is grade three. Then they'll have to invent something more for her!"

BOB KAUDERS

Care charity jobs furore

A charity campaigning for jobs for disabled people has been slated after admitting it did not know how many of its own staff were disabled.

Leading care and support charity Leonard Cheshire, which employs around 6,000 people, published a report in May looking at the social exclusion of disabled people.

The report, *Excluding Attitudes: Disabled people's experience of social exclusion**, surveyed 1,000 people and also disability focus groups. Only 14 per cent of those surveyed actually worked with a disabled person.

Dave Cooke, treasurer and membership secretary at the Trade Union Disability Alliance, said: "It is appalling. Disability organisations should

address their own practices before pronouncing to the world what it should do."

And Richard Wood, chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People, said: "Maybe Leonard Cheshire should set its own example and show the Government how it can be done."

A Leonard Cheshire spokesman said the charity was currently counting its disabled staff and should have the figure in mid-July. "We are working to increase the number of disabled people who are in key positions within the charity and within the workforce at large," he said.

*Free to charities. Individuals can make a donation, tel: 0171-802 8200.

Sex advice for carers

Professional carers are to get advice on dealing with disabled people's requests regarding their sexual needs.

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is to publish guidelines later this year. The issue made headlines recently when new research by Dr Sarah Earle of Coventry University referred to carers being asked to provide prostitutes for their clients.

A spokeswoman for the RCN

said: "Our general advice is that nurses should not get involved unless they have had specialist training."

Jef Smith, general manager at Counsel and Care, which campaigns for older people in care, commented: "There are several issues here, including the legal one of procuring, and there are also the professional and personal views of the care worker."

Kid E Quip

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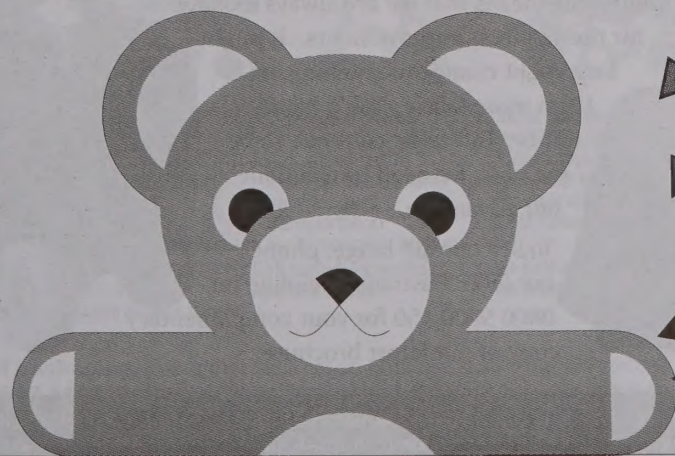
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Viagra veto unlawful

A High Court has found that the Government's attempts to ration NHS prescribing of the impotence drug Viagra are unlawful.

The court upheld a challenge to Health Secretary Frank Dobson made by manufacturer Pfizer. The company was

unhappy about guidelines limiting the causes of impotence for which the drug can be prescribed.

More restrictions will come into force on 1 July which veto Viagra for men whose impotence has a psychological cause. These restrictions may

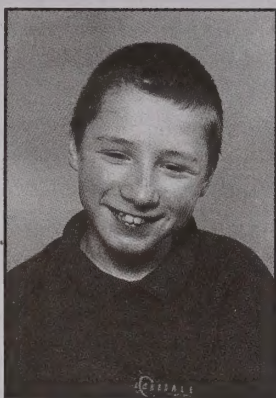
now also be challenged in the courts.

Men whose condition is linked to severe spinal injuries, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, spina bifida, polio, Parkinson's disease or single gene neurological disease are still eligible to get Viagra on prescription.

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Stop Press

News about the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) coming into force in October 1999

A new handbook – Notes on the Disability Discrimination Act as at May 1999 – written by David Ruebain is essential reading for organisations committed to promoting good practice under the Act. Includes sections on the impact and interpretation of the Act to date and guidance on the new regulations. For your copy please send a cheque/postal order for £10, payable to David Levene & Co to the address below. Contact David Ruebain if your organisation would like training on the DDA.

Council rapped

The Ombudsman has upheld a complaint against Cheshire County Council by the parents of a man who died in care.

The authority must pay £10,000 for not involving the man's parents in decisions about his care and not planning his care package properly.

The man, who was not named, had the rare condition Wolf Hirschhorn Syndrome, which caused severe learning difficulties and problems with vision and hearing.

Checks challenge

Plans to introduce criminal record checks for carers and volunteers could lull employers into a false sense of security, according to a new study.

The report* from the Better Regulation Task Force, an independent body, says people with no record may still pose a threat. Task Force chairman Lord Haskins said training and observation of staff are just as important as records.

Checks will cost employers £10 a time and the Government has refused to exempt the voluntary sector.

*Tel: 0171-270 3000.

Benefit interviews

Disabled people on benefits may have their payments cut if they refuse to attend interviews to discuss their benefits situation. The Government's new Welfare Reform Bill is



Chelsea charm: Blind and partially sighted visitors to the Sensory Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show were able to use a description tape specially recorded by Carol McGregor, mum of top actor Ewan McGregor. Sponsored by Action for Blind People and fragrance manufacturer Quest International, the Sensory Garden featured smells, sounds, textures and sights provided by attractive water features and strongly scented plants. It won a silver award from the show organisers, the Royal Horticultural Society.

introducing Single Work Focus Gateway interviews, designed to show claimants on certain benefits how they can increase their independence by getting work.

Mike Hurdis, benefits policy officer at Scope, believes attendance at the interviews should not be compulsory.

"We have no problem with people being offered support," he said, "but it should be on a voluntary basis."

Bully-boy tactics

Nearly all children who stammer have been bullied at school, most of them at least once a week, according to a recent study.

Over 80 per cent of 276 adults questioned said they had been bullied, although nearly half of

the teachers and parents surveyed said they knew nothing about the situation.

Most of the stammerers said the bullying had had an immediate bad effect on them, and over one-third said they had suffered long-term effects.

The study appeared in the June issue of the *British Journal of Educational Psychology*.

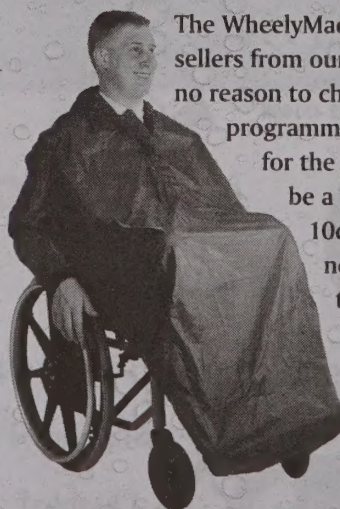
Help for parents

Home Secretary Jack Straw has launched a freephone helpline for parents under stress.

ParentLine – likely to receive 100,000 calls in the first year – offers support and information on issues such as divorce, separation, custody, bullying and drug abuse.

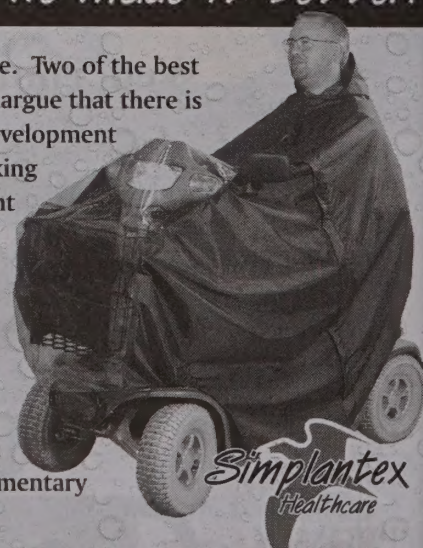
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Seahorse success: Mark Wilcox, market development manager at Nottingham Rehab Supplies, takes charge of a magnum of champagne and a certificate from DN editor Mary Wilkinson. Nottingham Rehab's Seahorse Sanichair won the New Products Showcase at Naidex, sponsored by DN. Over 500 visitors voted.

Regional rations

Access to medical treatment is subject to "postcode rationing" by local health authorities, according to research by the Consumers' Association's *Health Which?* publication.

The survey, published in June, found that decisions on certain treatments, including beta interferon therapy for people with multiple sclerosis and cochlear implants, may be available to people in one health authority but not in another because of each area's different criteria.

The *Health Which?* survey calls on the Government to tackle regional variations at

national level and concludes that "the current system is not fair on patients". The results are based on a survey of 117 authorities, of which just 35 responded.

In a second study of 2,000 people, *Health Which?* found that 77 per cent of people believe the NHS should provide all treatments, medicines and services, regardless of cost.

Peter Cardy, director of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, was pleased the survey had been carried out.

"We welcome any report which highlights the inequality of healthcare," he said. "Any

system that results in this sort of inequity makes a complete mockery of any idea of a national health service."

In *A First Class Service*, a white paper published in June 1998, the Government committed itself to ending what it called "the lottery of postcode healthcare". It also set up the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) to ensure that "best practice is spread across the whole country".

A Department of Health spokesperson said: "The government was aware of this inequity and addressing it is what NICE was set up to do."

Model message

Winners of a competition to find new models could find themselves represented by VisABLE, a new agency for disabled models.

The VisABILITY competition is part of the Leonard Cheshire campaign to promote the use of



Model Shannon Murray in 1994

disabled models. Several high street chains have given their backing, including Marks & Spencer and B & Q.

The campaign is backed by evidence from the US, where use of disabled models in ads resulted in increased sales.

"We're not asking companies to do this out of the kindness of their hearts," said Jeremy Hughes, director of public affairs at Leonard Cheshire. "There are hard-headed business reasons for adverts to reflect more realistically the communities we live in."

Supporting the campaign is professional model and wheelchair user Shannon Murray, who won the first modelling competition for disabled people, run by DN in 1994.

Head of policy at Greater London Action on Disability (GLAD), Brenda Ellis, was concerned. "Disabled people need to be part of the mainstream not part of a separate organisation," she said.

Winners will receive training from VisABLE. For details of the competition, write to VisABLE Competition, Leonard Cheshire, FREEPOST SW5925, London SW1P 4YY. Entries by 30 September.

Lords discuss limb vouchers

The House of Lords debated an NHS voucher scheme for artificial limbs in June.

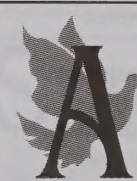
Lord Rowallan, Conservative, argued that prosthesis users should get vouchers which could be used privately. This would give people a wider choice, he said.

Government spokesman Lord Hunt said demand for private limbs was "relatively low".

Lord Rowallan pointed out that low demand might be because people did not know an option existed. In particular, they were being denied knowledge that there was a silicone-coated limb available.

David Sinclair from the Limbless Association said: "We are delighted that the House of Lords has discussed the issue so thoroughly."

The Government is expecting the results of its review of the wheelchair voucher scheme this month. The artificial limb scheme would be similar.



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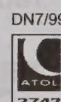
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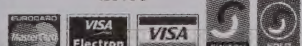
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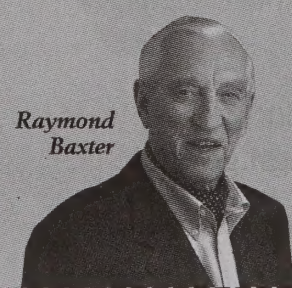
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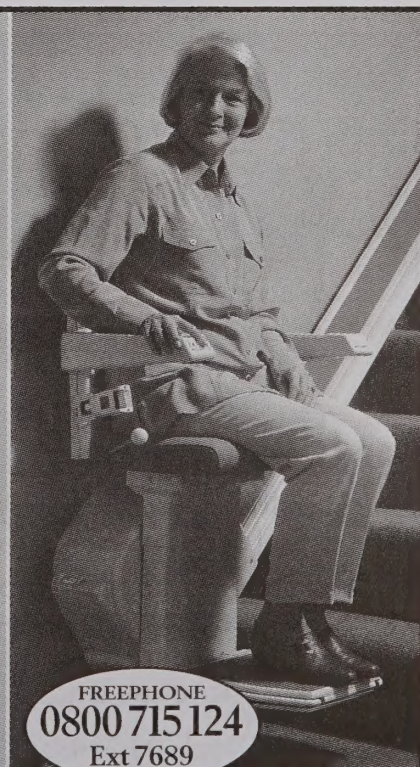
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Hospital discriminates

Stoke Mandeville's spinal injuries unit has been found to be in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act

A tribunal said sacking an employee with epilepsy was unfair and discriminatory.

Healthcare assistant Laura Jewell lost her job after having a seizure at work. She was told to apply for other posts in the

hospital but failed to get 11 jobs and was dismissed.

Stoke Mandeville's chief executive, Rodney Hill, said the trust was working with the union Unison to find a solution to the problem.

Ms Jewell said all she had ever wanted to do was nurse people.

"I have always been open about my condition," she said.

"It doesn't make me a danger to patients, staff or anyone else. I have pursued this case so that other people with epilepsy don't have to go through what I did."

The tribunal has asked the hospital and Ms Jewell to try to reach an agreement. Mr Hill said the trust was "giving a lot of time to this".

Traffic trauma

A survey has found that over one in five people with a visual impairment rarely leave home because of transport and mobility problems.

*Right of Way**, published by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), found people with visual impairments can be prisoners in their own homes.

Steve Winyard, RNIB's head of public policy, said: "We can send a rocket to Mars, but we can't design our streets to make it possible to travel safely."

A Department of Transport spokesperson told DN: "One of the key objectives of the new deal for transport is to increase access for everyone to various means of transport."

* £5, tel: 0345-023 153.
See page 10.



Better late than never: At long last we have a picture of Tanni Grey's wonderful wedding – we had hoped to include it in our June fashion feature. Paralympic gold medallist Tanni tied the knot with research chemist Dr Robert Thompson in Cardiff in May. Over 100 guests attended, including 14 other wheelchair users. GRAY GARNER

Bracelet claims criticised

Company claims that magnetic bracelets can have pain-relieving qualities have been criticised by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

The ASA found there was no "evidence" that magnetotherapy products can ease pain.

Nigel Broderick, co-director of Ecoflow, one company which supplies magnetic wristbands, said: "We are taking part in clinical trials, but it will take two years to get the results."

See letter, page 18.

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Charity tackles jobs

A new company, United Response in Business, aims to create 500 jobs for people with disabilities in top football clubs around the country over the next three years.

Set up by the charity United Response, the company has already had a successful £60,000 pilot contract with Fulham Football Club. And the club has now doubled the number of disabled people employed to 40.

Stockport County and Leeds United football clubs have signed up to provide 70 jobs. People with disabilities clean everything at the clubs, from the boardroom to the stands.

Now the company is talking with other clubs, including Leicester City, Arsenal, Tottenham Hotspur, Derby County, Crystal Palace and Sheffield United.

A spokeswoman for United Response said: "We are aiming

to give people the chance to work who have not had the opportunity. We are hoping eventually to move beyond football."

The 500 jobs are primarily aimed at people who have learning disabilities.

Mencap's director of public affairs, David Congdon, said the charity welcomed all projects that enabled people with learning disabilities to find meaningful employment.

Brain injury centre launch

A £1.48 million centre for brain-injured people, claiming to be the first of its kind, has opened in Cheltenham.

The centre, partly funded with National Lottery money, provides residential rehabilitation and re-education exclusively for newly injured people aged between 16 and 25.

The Centre for Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation (CABIR) is set in the 35-acre grounds of the National Star Centre College of Further Education in Cheltenham. It can accommodate 12 people and provide day care for another 12.

CABIR students will be offered psychological support,

speech therapy, physiotherapy, nursing care, life skills education and access to an on-site sports centre, swimming pool and theatre. The centre offers courses covering subjects ranging from the performing arts and sport to IT and business studies.

Ian Garrow, chief executive of the charity Headway, welcomed the centre, saying it would provide a long overdue service.

•The Royal College of Surgeons has criticised care for head-injured patients in some A&E departments. Not all units have specialist staff and equipment, the Royal College said.

Getting IT together

A course has been launched to help people with hearing impairments make the most of new technology and increase their job chances.

Six profoundly deaf people who use British Sign Language are on a pilot course. Studies include word processing, emailing, use of the Internet, databases, spreadsheets and video conferencing.

One of the students on the course aims to work in IT purchasing, while the others want to teach.

The BBC's *See Hear* programme and the University of Wolverhampton are among the organisations working with the Government's IT for All scheme to run the Wolverhampton-based course.



All's well: A disabled self-help group in Kraing Ampil South near Phnom Penh, Cambodia, raised funds to build a village well when the local river dried up. Previously, disabled villagers faced a 3km walk to the nearest well – an impossible task for most of them. The group is one of 36 set up in Cambodia by British charity Action on Disability and Development.

Save our school

Essex parents are angry at plans to shut a school with a nursery that takes disabled children.

Disability charity Scope has also condemned Essex county council plans to close the mainstream Maunds Wood School in Harlow.

Three-year-old Joshua Maynard, who has cerebral palsy, has attended Maunds Wood's nursery since November.

"What is being offered instead is not similar or better quality," his mother Julie said.

But Rene Morris, chair of education in Essex County

Council, said: "We are offering the opportunity for parents to have their children in mainstream primary schools with all the facilities."

The final decision is to be made by the Department for Education and Employment.

Parents were about to meet representatives of the Government to discuss the closure as *DN* went to press.

Jane Enticott, head of campaigns at Scope, said: "An inclusive policy must be backed by sufficient resources and support to fully meet the needs of disabled children."

In brief

Swallow success

Swallow Hotels is the first national hotel chain to win the disability symbol for good practice in employing people with disabilities. Swallow has 37 hotels, 19 of which offer rooms with disabled access.

Tel: 0191-419 4545.

Volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed to inspect social services provisions around the country for people with disabilities.

The closing date is 9 July.
Tel: 0171-972 2963.

Translation service

Non-English speakers can get information on cerebral palsy and other disabilities via the Language Line service.

Cerebral palsy helpline,
tel: 0800-626 216.

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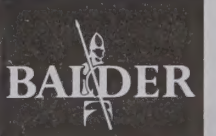
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Remploy says jobs are safe

Claims that no disabled people will be made redundant after factory mergers have been condemned as a "smokescreen" by a union boss.

The Government-funded scheme Remploy has more than 10,000 disabled workers, but the company is considering merging five sites to form two.

Remploy say the plans could boost the disabled workforce by over 800 people in three years. Any reduction in jobs would be "natural wastage".

Phil Davies, national secretary responsible for Remploy at the GMB union, claims there could be 1,000 job losses. "Many disabled workers are unable to contemplate the greater travelling distances involved in taking up any alternative jobs," he said.

Tony Withey, Remploy chief executive, denied the union's smokescreen accusations.

"Under these plans, there would be no job losses for disabled employees," he said.



It's loo-dicrous: People caught short in London's Archway may find it difficult to use the disabled toilet – it's located on a traffic island in the middle of one of the busiest roads in the capital. Dave Crawl (left) struggled across the road and did eventually manage to get there. Rented by Islington council at a cost of £13,000 a year, the toilet on Holloway Road is so inaccessible only 2,300 people have used it in the last nine years. That's £50 a flush! Plans are afoot to move the lavatory. In the meantime, keep your legs crossed.

Don't leave it too late!

There's still time to enter the Freedom in Focus photography competition being run by DN/Leonard Cheshire.

Send in a strong image of disability by 27 August and you could win a week's holiday at Princess Diana's childhood home, a day in a multimedia workshop, a Kodak Advantix or Yashica Acclaim camera and lots of film.

Check the April or May issues of DN for rules, or tel: 0171-619 7323.

Call for carer changes

Radical changes to the lives of long-term carers are called for in a new report from the Carers National Association (CNA)*.

It recommends that carers be given a right to receive services on their own behalf, and that they are given money to buy support services through a nationwide payment scheme.

It says health and social care support to disabled people should not be withheld because there is a family carer, and that social services should set up short-term break schemes.

The report, *We're in this together*, is backed by research which shows that home help, respite care and financial security are top priorities for carers.

There are nearly six million carers in Britain providing services which are estimated to save the nation around £34bn a year.

*£10 from the CNA, 20-25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JT, tel: 0171-566 7626.

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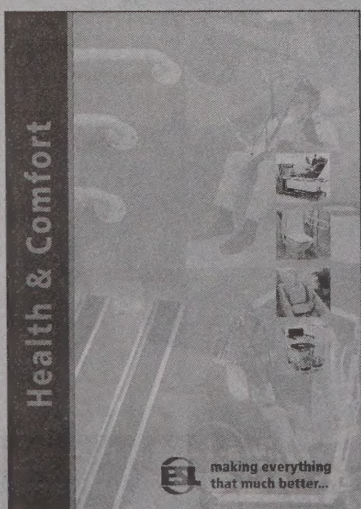
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Ashley awards for deaf children

More than 300 young people will celebrate the year 2000 with the adventure of a lifetime thanks to the £1.7m Jack Ashley Millennium Awards for Young Deaf People.

People aged 14-25 who have hearing impairments can take part in projects including a trek to Everest Base Camp and a scientific expedition to Greenland.

The awards were launched last month by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and are funded by the Millennium Commission. They

are aimed at helping young deaf people boost their self-confidence.

NDCS chief executive Susan Daniels welcomed the project. "These awards may give us the positive role models young deaf people need," she said.

The awards are named after disability rights campaigner Lord Ashley.

Application packs are available from the early autumn. The first deadline for applications is January 2000. NDCS, tel: 0171 490 8656.

New car insurance launched

Scope Select is now offering car insurance that is competitively priced and has no additional premiums if you have an adapted vehicle.

Put together with charity insurance brokers MCIS and underwritten by Axa, the policy includes automatic cover for specialist equipment, no compulsory accidental damage excess payments and free green cards for overseas travel. The

policy is open to anyone.

People with disabilities are very often charged high rates for adapted vehicles and yet, says MCIS assistant director Mark Griffiths, "there is no statistical evidence that disabled people are a greater risk than non-disabled drivers".

Scope Select has a range of home, travel and pet insurance.

Tel: 0121-236 3044.



On yer bike: National Bike Week was given a boost when dozens of cyclists with disabilities joined the Cycling For All festival at Dulwich Park, London, in June. Aimed at promoting cycling for people with special needs, the festival had the UK's largest fleet of specialist bikes, including wheelchair tandems. For details of special needs cycle sales and cycle hire in Dulwich Park, tel: 0181-299 6636.

Stranded at the station

A new London railway station got off to a poor start because of a faulty lift.

Built by Railtrack, West Brompton station is the first new mainline station to be opened in west London in a generation. It boasts a special lift to help people who have mobility impairments.

The lift is operated by controllers via closed circuit

television, which should help prevent crime and alert lift operators when customers wish to use the service.

However, a fault with the lift control meant that the lift was not operational at the station's grand unveiling on 1 June.

DN staff member Dan Batten, who was reporting on the opening, found himself totally stranded at the lift.

"I couldn't get anybody to open the lift up for me. It was like a dead zone," he said.

A spokesman for the station operators, Silverlink, admitted the lift had been out of action. "The operators would have been able to see him but would not have been able to work the lift," he said. Silverlink said the problem would be fixed as DN went to press.

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The city limits

The Government wants us all to use public transport more, but is that really possible at the moment? A team of intrepid DN reporters take a look at the capital's buses, trains and tubes

Improving public transport is one of the Government's major policy targets (*see page 2 of the motoring supplement*) and access is part of it. DN sent a team of investigators out to see how easy it is to ride London's public transport.

We looked, in particular, at three new services which are supposed to be accessible: "kneeling" buses, the extension to London Underground's "step-free" Jubilee Line and the express train to Heathrow airport from Paddington.

Wheelchair user Christina Domingo tried one of the kneeling buses on the 43 route, which runs from north London

to London Bridge station.

Christina uses an adapted car and had only been on a bus once before. She boarded the 43 at Colney Hatch Lane.

"When the bus pulled up, it was not close enough to the kerb," she said. "When the driver saw me he told me to wait while he got closer. The ramp was steep and I had to get another passenger to help me. Once on board I had to manoeuvre my chair into the space provided for wheelchairs, which was difficult because there was a post in the way."

There were other snags. "When I got off the bus, I asked one of the passengers to help



JUBILEE LINE EXTENSION PROJECT

me down. But to operate the ramp, the driver had to close the doors after the other passengers had got off. Drivers should tell people helping wheelchair users off the bus that this will happen."



Happy ending: Dan managed to hail a black cab within 10 minutes

Even so, Christina said she liked using the bus: "I would use it again, but not on a regular basis for work."

Wheelchair user Michelle Daley tried to check out the new section of the Jubilee Line which runs from Stratford East to the Millennium Dome.

"I went to Stratford East twice and tried to take the lift to the platform," she said. "On each occasion I was told the lift was

not working. I was told I could be carried upstairs by staff, but I refused."

Gioya Steinke had a better experience on the Heathrow to Paddington Express. She is registered blind.

"We made our way to the train via two escalators," she said. "There is a level entry to the train, but there is a small gap that might snare a white cane. When we returned to Heathrow we used the lifts. They are a fair walk away but are on level ground with well-lit walkways. The lifts are large and have 'speaks' and bleeps."

Gioya was accompanied by



No go: Michelle Daley looks longingly at the Jubilee Line lift...



...and this is where she would have been if the lift had worked

"Heaven help any disabled person who dares to go out on impulse"

her husband but says she would be happy about going alone. The journey takes 15 minutes and costs £10 each way.

DN's Dan Batten and two friends decided to try their luck with a taxi cab to get them to the West End for a night out.

"We called the number, only to be told that we couldn't get a cab for three hours," said Dan. "Heaven help any disabled person who dares to go out on impulse."

The three decided to try a black cab instead and they managed to hail an accessible one with a ramp inside 10 minutes.

"The drivers were fine," Dan said, "and we didn't have any trouble getting a suitable cab late at night. But it did cost us £10 each way."

Although the kneeling bus and the Jubilee Line do not yet come up with the goods, a London Transport spokesperson promised that things would improve. The Jubilee Line lifts will be operating soon, and London Transport is urging local authorities to adjust the levels of kerbs.

Tell us about your experiences of transport and any ideas you have for improving it. Address on page 3.

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Aussies rule



Outstanding effort: Margaret McEleny in the 150m medley
GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

British swimmers' hopes in the inaugural BT Five Nations Trophy were dashed by the Aussie Paralympic squad.

The event, part of the BT Swimming National Open Championships, were held in Sheffield, 4-6 June.

The Australians won 18,024 points to Britain's 17,331.

Britain's best performance came from Nottingham's James Crisp, who, a day before he was to sit his GCSEs, broke two world records and notched up 2,071 points.

Other outstanding efforts came from Margaret McEleny

from Greenock, who gained 860 points in the 150m individual medley; Kenny Cairns from Erskine, 732 points in a 50m freestyle event; and Matthew Walker from Stockport, who won 1,031 points in another 50m freestyle event, breaking the record he had set the previous week.

A 'flu bug forced British captain Chris Holmes out of the 50m freestyle. Had the holder of nine Paralympic gold medals managed a time 3.5 seconds outside his best, Britain would have gained enough points to win the event.

Records at dwarf games

Thirteen world records bit the dust in the 6th National Dwarf Games held in Peterborough at the end of May.

Athletes from five countries took part in events including hockey, basketball and indoor bowls (boccia).

Members of the Sydney 2000 Paralympic training teams set the pace in athletics and swimming, and the British javelin Olympic gold medallist Fatima Whitbread gave coaching tips.

For more information about dwarf sports events, tel: 0121 454 5582.

Basket teams tie

The nail-biting GB v Canada wheelchair basketball test series ended in a tie, each country hanging on to two close-run matches.

This was a warm-up event as teams prepare for Paralympic qualification tournaments. GB will be playing in the Netherlands 3-11 July.

Team talk

Tanni Grey-Thompson

Mixed feelings

The European road-racing season got underway with two of the biggest marathons in Germany and Switzerland. There were a lot of mixed feelings, as the week also included a memorial race for a Swiss athlete and my good friend, Daniela Jutzeler, who was killed whilst road training five years ago. I had travelled and stayed with her many times and this brought back my worst memory as an athlete – competing in the European 800m final on the same day as my friend's funeral. This was a race that Daniela should have been competing in and her parents wanted it to take place.

Out of the darkness came some very positive work, as road safety in Switzerland is now second to none, and the Foundation set up after her death has raised millions to help other disabled people.

The rest of the trip passed in a blur of training and competing



(some good, some not) and also my first experience of camping since I was in the Guides. Joining a group of other British athletes, I had a wonderful time, but I am more than ever convinced that I am just a fair-weather camper. We only got washed out one night, which was pretty good considering the amount of rain we had. Sitting there the following morning with all my possessions around me drying in the sun, looking as if I was having a car boot sale, I realised this was not my idea of fun. An accessible campsite and a caravan when the weather got really bad saved the day.

If you asked me which is hardest, a marathon or camping, I would say camping!

Tanni Grey-Thompson is a Paralympic gold medallist.

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Counselling needed on epilepsy drugs

Women with epilepsy are being denied information about the possible dangers of anticonvulsant drugs on their unborn children because of the ignorance of GPs and even epilepsy specialists, campaigners claim. They say people should be informed of the risks.

The risk of a woman with epilepsy having a child with birth abnormalities is thought to be between 6 and 10 per cent. But this could be an

underestimation, according to new research to be published later this year.

Linda Hamilton, the founder of the National Foetal Anticonvulsant Association, collaborated with the research. She says that symptoms can range from heart defects and cleft palates to developmental delay and learning difficulties, which become apparent later.

"Preconceptual counselling is essential," she said, "because

coming off medication is even more risky to the woman and her child. At the moment one drug is no safer than another."

Ms Hamilton is backed by the British Epilepsy Association, which says that doctors are generally unaware of the possible dangers to foetal development despite information being available since 1986.

The Association has issued a free pamphlet *Women and Epilepsy*, tel: 0113-243 9393.



Safe or unsafe? Mobile phones could trigger epileptic seizures, according to a Warwick University physicist. Dr Gerard Hyland said that light flashing can induce epileptic attacks, and there was no reason why other electromagnetic radiation would not do the same.

In brief

- New treatments could be developed for osteoporosis after the discovery of a gene which appears to control bone strength. Researchers now plan to design a compound that mimics the action of the gene and will build strong bones.

- A new type of drug to treat late-onset diabetes has been launched in the US by the UK pharmaceuticals company SmithKline Beecham. It is expected to be on sale in the UK within a year. The drug,

Avandia, treats non-insulin dependent diabetes. Instead of increasing insulin production or decreasing glucose levels, the drug works by improving the ability of cells to absorb the body's own insulin.

- Researchers at University College London have received £200,000 to develop their lumbar arterial root implant. The implant is designed to stimulate the nerve roots of patients. It featured in a BBC documentary last year, showing the progress of the first patient, Julie Hill, who was paralysed from the waist down.

Girl saved by cord blood cells

Stem cells taken from the umbilical cord of a new baby have saved the life of a four-year-old girl with the blood disease Fanconi's anaemia.

This is the first time that the technique, developed in France ten years ago, has been used between unrelated people in Britain.

A bone marrow transplant is the usual treatment for people needing stem cells to generate bone marrow lost in diseases

such as leukaemia. The advantage of cord stem cells is that they can be stored and do not require such an accurate tissue match between donor and recipient. The disadvantage is that they do not produce a large enough dose of cells for use in adults.

But, according to Cath Chapman of the National Blood Service in Newcastle upon Tyne, experiments are now under way worldwide. The

Blood Service was responsible for finding the cells for the transplant operation through its cord blood bank register.

"This method has the advantage of being able to supply stem cells quickly," Ms Chapman said. "We don't need to track down a donor to extract the bone marrow."

The USA leads the way in using cord stem cells. Over 562 operations have been carried out in New York alone.



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The work of artist James Lancaster reflects the pain he has had from muscular dystrophy. Rod Hermeston meets him

Art from the heart

James Lancaster, who is 24 and has muscular dystrophy, is a pioneer artist. When I meet him he is on half-term break from Hereward College in Coventry, where he is the first student to complete a long-distance fine art degree with the University of Leeds.

Frail in his electric wheelchair, with distinctive short hair and large eyes, James Lancaster is

"Hopefully, my show will give people an experience of being in pain and not being able to escape"

an artist with a difference. His mother has to lift his hand for me to shake it.

James has come a long way since taking up the brush at school. It has not been easy and his art reflects his experience of pain and disability.

His work at Hereward includes a piece called *The Screw*, a painting which depicts a body being twisted by a corkscrew device.

"*The Screw* describes the way I view my body being twisted and distorted through my



Art alert: James (left) and his enabler Howard Knight

disability," he says. "I think it was self-therapy."

James' work has gradually become more abstract. *Breathing*, for instance, depicts a series of vertical bars. It was produced following an illness when James actually stopped breathing. Each bar represents

a breath and its width corresponds to how deep that breath was.

For his end-of-year show James created a room covered in zig-zag images representing pain.

"The viewer is inside surrounded by the same image

repeated. There is no escape until you walk out of the space," he says. "Hopefully, it will affect people physically and give them an experience of being in pain and not being able to escape."

How he produces his pictures has also changed. He used to be able to work on the final piece himself but now he uses enablers, telling them where and how to apply material on a canvas.

"I suppose my disability has influenced my style and the way I work. But I like minimal abstract things anyway," he says.

Increasingly, he is using a computer to create and develop his images.

Hereward College has allowed James' art to flourish. He feels it would have been far harder to do a degree anywhere else because of his high care and nursing needs. He hopes other students will follow his example and study for their own art degrees.

The type of muscular dystrophy James has can often shorten life, but he is philosophical about the future. "It's a bit corny, but I live life one day at a time," he says.

He is hoping to do a Masters degree or work in art or graphic design. His mother is arranging for him to visit the Neuromuscular Centre in



The Screw, one of James' early works

Winsford, Cheshire, which includes a company where people with muscular dystrophy can get training and work in graphic design.

"Ideally, I'd like to be a recognised artist exhibiting around the world," he says.

There is obviously much more to come from James Lancaster.

James' work will be exhibited in Coventry's Showcase Galleries for two weeks from 14 June, and his end-of-year exhibition will be at the Bretton Hall Campus in York for a week starting 13 July. DN's art critic Adam Reynolds will review the Coventry exhibition in the August issue.



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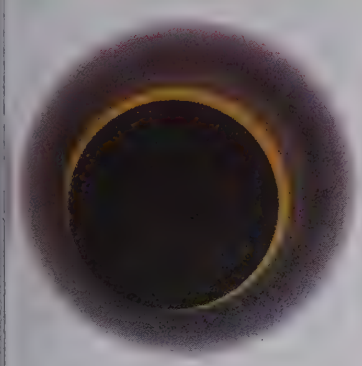
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This month and next, DN looks at some of the things you can see and do this summer



The dark side of the moon

If you want to see the solar eclipse in Cornwall, the Lizard Peninsula is the place to be, says Julia Schofield

A giant festival site at Goonhilly Downs on the Lizard Peninsula, southern Cornwall, is being prepared to celebrate the total eclipse of the sun on 11 August. It's the place to be if

"The experience will be moving and spectacular"

you also want five days of cutting-edge music, including Kula Shaker.

Crowds of up to 20,000 are expected at this celebration. Provision will include parking near your tent if you're camping, showers, toilets with RADAR keys and signing from all four stages during events. The terrain is probably a mite rough for all but the most intrepid of wheelchair users.

The Peninsula will be one of the first places in Europe to see the total eclipse, so the experience will be both moving and spectacular. Wildlife is expected to go silent during the two minutes of darkness, and freak winds could rise from nowhere for just a few seconds.

Eclipse phenomena aside, the Lizard is really worth a visit. It is an area of special natural interest in itself.

Factfile

The festival site is open 5-15 August; the event will take place 7-14 August and costs £150 for the full week. Tel: (01326) 280072.

If you would like details of accessible accommodation in Cornwall, contact the Cornwall Tourist Board, tel: (01872) 274057.

The Earth Centre, which opened near Doncaster this year, gives a unique view of sustainable living. Barry Jones and Tracy Beardsley took a look

My companion on my trip to the Earth Centre was Tracy, a wheelchair user. I am registered blind and use a guide dog.

The first building at the Earth Centre is the Planet Earth Experience. The whole building is underground and is full of wonderful changing sounds, colours and scenes. The next

"Children and adults alike tread barefoot over differently textured surfaces"

stop is Action for the Future, where the story of the planet is told. From then on, there are numerous trails and challenges that visitors can choose.

Nature Works explores aquatic habitats and other ecosystems and encourages hands-on play and education. Children can dip their hands into the indoor ponds to collect algae, bugs and fish in jam jars and then release their catches into the outdoor wildlife pool. You can view some of these beasts magnified on to a screen.

Earthy antics



Out of the blue: plants are grown in blue recycled glass outside the Planet Earth gallery

JENNIFER BATES

Outside is the Wilderness Play Centre, which offers children an imaginative and physical experience. The area features creatively sculptured "living" fences and borders of growing willow. At the heart of Wilderness Play are two kaki peace trees from Japan, the only ones in the UK, and the Rokkaku Trail, which continues the Japanese sensory theme with sound, touch and smell experiences. Children and adults alike tread barefoot over differently textured surfaces, listen to nature through extraordinary sculptured

trumpets and smell unique Earth Centre scents.

The Water Works houses a full-scale sewage treatment system called the "living machine". Waste water is cleaned through a sophisticated – and visible – biological system. There are water-saving devices throughout the Centre, which aims to use 20 per cent of the water that a conventional centre would consume. The whole site is solar-powered.

The restaurant offers organic food, and the shop sells everything from solar radios to organic chocolate.

Factfile

The Earth Centre is at Denaby Main, Doncaster DN12 4EA, tel: (01709) 512000. Admission is £4.95 for adults who arrive by sustainable transport and £8.95 by car. Children over five and concessions pay £4.95. All exhibitions and facilities are accessible – and most other areas are too. The Centre opens 10am to 6pm – last admission 4pm.

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Live it up in Legoland



Take it to the top: the Rimmers take a trip on the Sky Rider



Hold on tight: Ellie at the wheel of a Boating School craft

The Windsor leisure park is well known as a fun day out, but is it accessible? Isobel Rimmer takes her family to investigate

Legoland prides itself on ease of use, with many of the rides accessible to disabled people. The Rimmer family was ready to check it out.

We have three children, Josie (8), Ellie (7) and Tom (4). Ellie has cerebral palsy. She can stand and walk short distances with support but her balance is not good. We use a Pathfinder chair when we're out.

Legoland definitely seems quite accessible. Some rides Ellie couldn't do – the fast Dragon Coaster, for instance – but nearly all were possible or had some special seating. You have to be bold – only one, the Boating School, actually signposts a special entry for disabled people. On others you have to ask. The staff are helpful and very friendly, but you can feel a little awkward – better signs would help.

The entertainments are excellent. We saw the Magic Forest, where adults dress as animals and perform trapeze acts, and the Samurai Big Adventure, where men – ex-Olympic gymnasts, stunt men and divers – throw themselves off a lighthouse

tower. But access to these is poor and there aren't any suitable areas for families with wheelchairs to sit together. We ended up leaving Ellie's Pathfinder and sitting her on our knees. We talked with one of the managers and they were open to suggestions on how to improve things – very helpful but a little lacking in awareness.

The toilets were excellent, very clean and with all the right equipment, although someone set the alarm off by mistake at one point and no staff member came to investigate.

The restaurants were expensive – you could easily spend £5 or £10 a head – and

Ellie's verdict

Magic Theatre	☹
Pirate Goldwash	☹☹
Sky Rider	☹
Imagination Theatre	☹
Whirlybird Helicopter	☹☹
Waterworks	☹☹
Fairy Tale Brook	☹
Puppet Theatre	☹
Boating School	☹☹☹
Balloon School	☹
Stunt Show	☹
Dragon's Apprentice	☹☹
I-Spy Express	☹
Brickadilly's Carousel	☹☹
Magic Forest Circus	☹☹

they can get busy, making it difficult with a wheelchair. It could be an idea to take a picnic, although you would have to carry it round with you.

All in all we had a great day out with excellent – mostly accessible – facilities. The only let-down was the lack of disability awareness, although management does seem keen to make changes.

Factfile

Legoland is at Windsor Park, Windsor, Berks SL4 4AY, tel: (01753) 626111. It is open between 13 March and 31 October, 10am to 6pm. Admission is £16.50 for adults and £13.50 for children aged 3-15. Senior citizens pay £10.50.

- Some tips:
- ★ Be prepared to go up the exit ramps to get on the rides – don't worry, this is okay
 - ★ Get the Legoland guide for guests with disabilities – it's extremely comprehensive
 - ★ Take snacks and drinks – you could spend a lot of money very easily
 - ★ Walk down the hill and take the train ride back up – it's much easier all round

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Summer days


There are things to suit all tastes this summer. Dan Batten finds out

 Does pedal power make your pulse race? Then check out the National Cycle Network being developed by charity Sustrans. When finished, it will extend over 8,000 miles, with many paths and walkways accessible to wheelchair users, walkers and cyclists of all abilities. For more information, contact Sustrans, tel: 0117-929 0888.

 Have a smashing time at the National Glass Centre, which celebrates Sunderland's glass industry heritage. There is a permanent exhibition in the Kaleidoscope Gallery, where you can see how glass is formed and how it is used to make items like light bulbs and television screens. Work from Sunderland University graduates is on show until 1 August. You can also try your hand at some glass-making if you book a session. Admission is £5 or £2.50 for concessions, tel: 0191-515 5555.

 If you like it loud, there's only one place to be this summer – the Ozzfest at Earls Court, London, on 14-15 August. You will see the last shows to be performed by the original Black Sabbath line-up featuring Ozzy Osbourne. The bill also includes the Backyard Babies and my personal favourites Machine Head. A section for wheelchair users is available very close to the stage, so bring your earplugs. Tickets are £32.50 from Earls Court Olympia box office, tel: 0171-373 8141.

 If your tastes are a bit more sedate, you could try one of English Heritage's events. The children's festival in Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire, 4 July, has music, dance and drama for kids to watch and take part in. There's a Roman festival, 24-25 July at Richborough Roman Fort, Kent, and a Victorian cricket weekend at Scarborough Castle, North Yorkshire, on 21 - 22 August. Contact English Heritage, tel: 0171-973 3434.


 The Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery holds the city's collection of fine and decorative arts, an historic and

contemporary art exhibition, and the Circle of Life ethnography gallery. The gallery is being made more accessible in consultation with the museum's own Drawbridge

access advisory group. Sessions for disabled people only are also available. Admission is £2 or £1 for concessions, but entry is free on weekdays. Tel: 0115-915 3700.



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DN

Letters to the Editor



Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW
 Minicom: 0171-619 7332 Fax: 0171-619 7331
 E-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk
 Website: <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

Welcome to DN

If you are one of the 50,000 visitors to the Mobility Roadshow receiving a free, introductory copy of *Disability Now*, you may be reading DN for the first time. I hope you enjoy it, find it useful, especially the motoring supplement and the job adverts, and feel as a disabled person or carer that the newspaper is for you.

Half the DN team has a disability, and most of our contributors are disabled or the parent of a disabled person, so you are getting your news and comment "straight from the horse's mouth".

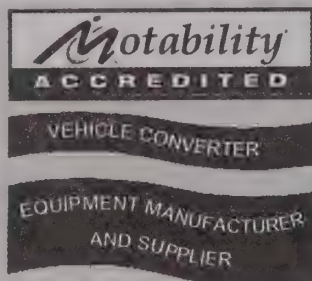
We welcome your letters, tip-offs and ideas. For example, we are now running more colour pages, and jobs and back issues are now on our website. Please help us by telling other people about DN.

Best wishes,

Henry Wilkinson

Editor

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Magnetic answer to pain

I am a below-the-knee amputee of 19 years and until recently I have suffered almost continuously from severe and debilitating phantom pains to my stump area and osteo-arthritic pains to both knees.

I had not found any satisfactory relief from prescriptions of painkillers, herbal/homeopathic equivalents, anti-inflammatories or the application of a TENS machine.

About eight months ago I "stumbled" on an article about

the potential benefits of magnotherapy (the relief of pain and acceleration of healing by the application of a magnetic field) through wearing a magnetic wristband.

With nothing to lose and anxious to be pain and drug free, I managed to acquire one for a trial period.

I am still wearing the wristband and my phantom pains and arthritic aches have diminished to just an occasional twinge, which is

quite manageable. My drug intake is now zero and I feel a lot better for it.

I think so highly of the wristband that I have become a distributor for the company, Ecoflow in Saltash, Devon.

Their Bioflow wristbands cost £29.99 to £49.99. Readers may like to contact me for more information.

Mike Fairlie

31 Wayside Crescent
 Harrogate,
 N Yorkshire HG2 8NJ

Minister is challenged

My difficulties with the Benefits Agency ("Vindicated activist to fight on", DN, April '99) elicited messages of support from disabled and non-disabled people nationwide, which were a great source of comfort and strength to me.

In the same issue I read a comment piece by the Minister for Disabled People, Margaret Hodge, expressing strong sentiments about challenging and confronting discrimination. Part of this pro-active strategy is to involve different bodies and organisations.

However, perhaps the Minister should look a little closer to home, ie at the actions of her civil (or rather at times uncivil) servants.

The loss of my benefits illegally for three months was not an isolated incident. Neither is the kind of letter that

says "Why don't you get a job instead of sponging off the state?"

I pose the question to Ms Hodge: is it acceptable for anyone to be subjected to abuse from a civil servant who's bigotry is perhaps only surpassed by ignorance?

Also, why, after repeated requests to Medical Services' customer services, do they refuse to accept evidence that proves not only the department from which it was sent but also proof of who sent it?

If I provide evidence direct to her office, will she consider it and act? Or is it a case of "not in my backyard"?

Chris Marshall

Co-ordinator
 Incapacity Action Group
 North East
 Wallsend People's Centre
 Tyne & Wear

Hit them where it hurts

With reference to Geoffrey Perrins' experiences with Royal & SunAlliance Motability (DN, May), I suggest he considers purchasing shares in Royal & SunAlliance. This will give him the ability to raise a question at the AGM.

As a public company, they will be interested to hear of the problems experienced by a disabled person who is also a shareholder.

Peter A Budgen MID, MIMIS
 Barming
 Maidstone, Kent

PC pulse

by Dan Batten

Redemption run

Cornwall Disabled Association recently took delivery of a new 49-seater coach after much hard work and fundraising. To put the icing on the cake, the Bishop of Truro was called upon to bless the coach in a ceremony outside Truro Cathedral.

While not wishing to mock religion, DN fails to see the logic behind this. What benefits this blessing will bestow upon passengers is open for debate. Drivers could benefit, though. After all, it must be nice to be protected when transporting a cargo of "sinners".

Forgetful Auntie

It was good to see the BBC's publicity machine firing on all cylinders recently.

With a major new series, *The Disabled Century*, about to go on air, you would imagine Auntie would be keen to promote it in good time so that everyone would know about it.

DN received publicity material two days before the first episode was broadcast, too late to alert our readers.

Still, what use would coverage in the leading disability publication be to viewing figures?

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Win Gowrings' super
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a year
Plus handy driving info

What a sport!



CLICKERS

To kick off *DN's* motoring supplement, Margie Woodward takes a spin in a fabulous converted MG

I have been driving for 30 years, starting at the tender age of 16 when I bought an old Invacar for £50. I progressed to conventional automatics, but I had never driven a sports car. When *DN* asked me to test an MG, I jumped at the chance.

Racing up to Nottingham (keeping to speed limits of course), I began to have doubts. Would I be able to manage the controls? Was I insured?

Too late, I found myself outside the Nottingham MG Centre, where David Wheeler met me. Waiting for another Dave – the poor chap who had the awesome task of checking I could control the car – Mr Wheeler told me he had started

"The roof was down, the wind was blowing through my hair and I had my dark shades on."

converting cars because his mother and sister were disabled and wanted the same opportunities as anybody else.

Dave arrived and it was time to get going. When I sank into the seat, it was like sitting right on the road. This is an old car – there are no electric windows, automatic indicator return or power steering – but she is such a beautiful creature.

The ride felt wonderful. The roof was down, the wind was

blowing through my hair and I had my dark shades on – what a marvellous picture.

It's certainly not like driving a modern car. Handling is heavy even with a steering wheel knob, and you feel every bump on the road.

But I wouldn't have missed the experience for the world.

"That hour gave my self-esteem a boost that I shall not forget when I'm stuck on the M25."

Maybe the gearbox isn't as smooth or the acceleration as quick as in a modern car, but that hour gave my self-esteem a boost that I shall not forget when I'm stuck on the M25 in my Astra.

So how has the car been adapted? The driver's door has been increased in size by 36 per cent, which is even better than the Vauxhall Astra's 41in, and automatic transmission has been fitted. There are hand controls for acceleration and braking, while the foot pedals have been left in for dual control. A Servo-assisted system has been added to help with braking, and the boot has been modified to fit a standard government-issue wheelchair.

With all that, wouldn't you think the car would cost a small fortune? But the

converted MG actually costs a fairly reasonable £9,995, and the car is likely to hold its value. Finance is not available from Motability, but there is a

classic car policy available from the MG Owners' Club and MG Car Club.

We brought the car back and I gave the keys back reluctantly.

Now I must remember to buy that lottery ticket...

Nottingham MG Centre, tel: 0115-961 5283.



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Constables LTD





Transport Minister Glenda Jackson outlines public transport changes that have already taken place and Government plans for the near future

'We are not anti-car'



with reduced vision, impaired hearing or walking difficulty.

One requirement is that new trains regulated under the Act must announce every stop in both audible and visual forms. They must also provide audible and visual information about delays and so on.

The next regulations in the pipeline are on buses. From early

next year all new, large, single-deck buses must meet accessibility requirements and from 2001 the same will apply to double-deckers. There has been something of a revolution in the bus industry, with UK companies moving to low, flat-floor buses ahead of the regulations – a triumph of passenger needs over engineering scepticism! The

right designs are only part of it, however; traffic management, driver training and information are all as important.

Our proposals for accessible taxis are also progressing and we hope to bring forward regulations to apply from 2002.

While the focus of the DDA is on public transport, there are other developments which affect disabled people and transport. One is our proposal to reduce unnecessary car use in city centres.

Let me make it clear that we are not anti-car. We do want to encourage people to think about their priorities before they use a car for every journey.

The Greater London Authority Bill, which is now having its second reading in the House of Lords, includes powers to begin electronic charging schemes in London. Exemptions will be for the Mayor to decide. Outside London, we will introduce legislation for electronic charging as soon as possible

and we will start with pilot schemes in these areas.

I hope that disabled people who now rely on their cars will soon begin to have the choice that others take for granted. We recognise that for some there may never be a substitute for the car. For others, the

"Companies have been moving to flat-floor buses – a triumph of passenger needs over engineering scepticism!"

ability to use public transport may depend on factors including their destination, the weather and so on. Whatever schemes I decide to introduce, the needs of disabled people will be a key concern.

Another issue which is a constant source of debate is the Orange Badge scheme. There will always be some who are judged to be ineligible who feel they have a strong case for

having a badge, many with genuine needs. I feel we must be tough in order to protect the needs of the most severely disabled people for whom the badge is essential. My statutory advisers, the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee, support this view.

There has been concern about the change from the Orange Badge to the European Blue Badge, which will be phased in from next year. With the new badge, people who want to take their cars abroad can be sure that it will be recognised in other countries of the European Union (EU). We took the decision to join the European scheme with the support of disabled people and there will be no changes to any other aspect of the badge.

I know that there have been some fears about unequal eligibility for badges in other countries, but the Blue Badge will only put on a formal basis a reciprocal arrangement with badges from other countries that has existed for many years.

It is not possible to cover all these issues in depth here. But let me restate very clearly this Government's commitment to comprehensive civil rights for disabled people and our belief that mobility is fundamental to achieving that goal.

Two years ago, when we wrote about the transport provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), the proposals were only being developed. Now some of them are in force.

From 1 January this year all new railway rolling stock coming into service must comply with very detailed requirements, including access for wheelchairs and people

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David Griffiths has a very pleasurable meeting with the new VW Lupo E

Lovely Lupo

For years, the VW Polo was one of the best small cars around, but the market badly needed something new. That something is the Lupo – guaranteed to turn heads as you pull away from the lights.

Driven spiritedly over the Yorkshire Wolds, the Lupo

took humps, adverse cambers and rough surfaces in its stride. The power steering is a dream, precise yet amazingly light.

Access is no problem thanks to huge doors, and the legroom for driver and passengers betters that of many a family saloon. The car has four grab

rails (even the driver has one) and five head rests.

The seats are highly adjustable. It really is a friendly little car. The layout may not be great



Yummy in yellow: the Lupo will turn heads

on the eye, but it is easy on the user. I wonder why no-one else has designed a gearshift like the Lupo's before – it has an easy-grip horizontal rod and a large thumb-welcoming button release.

But all is not perfect. The back seat is pretty cramped and who on earth decided to put the powered window switches in the armrest of the door? I was forever activating them by mistake. And the mirrors are nothing short of dangerous – they really distort the view.

This is not a car for wheelchair users. The boot would not accommodate a chair without folding down the rear seats, and there is insufficient space behind the front seats to fit a chair.

But people with arthritis, limited upper limb strength, stiff hands or fingers, lower

"The Lupo is guaranteed to turn heads as you pull away from the lights"

limb problems or short stature will probably find the Lupo is just what they have been looking for.

The Lupo comes with power-assisted steering, an adjustable steering wheel, powered windows, air conditioning, high-level rear brake indicators, clock and a big-car feel. Fuel consumption should work out at around 50mpg on longer runs if you avoid the temptation to explore the potential of that superb gearbox.

The Lupo will be coveted, especially by anyone who finds themselves being overtaken by one. This was the first Lupo I had seen, and it was a pleasurable meeting.

This test was made possible by Alfred Bekker, who did a superb conversion job at extremely short notice, tel: (01377) 241700. The Lupo starts at around £7,245.



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Plus no advance payment

The Lanos 1.4 SE, includes as standard:
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For information on the Daewoo range and your nearest Motability accredited Outlet, call us free on:

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The roadshow rundown



A blue van is parked on a grassy area next to a building. The rear hatch is open, and a ramp is extended from the back of the van. The van has a white lower body section and a white wheel arch. The building in the background has a white wall and a window.

Postcode _____ DN/7/99



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Rica has tested equipment to help wheelchair users get into cars. David Yelding reports

An uplifting experience

Freedom often means using your car and wheelchair – and they don't always fit together. Rica has tested devices to help wheelchair users get into cars, and get their wheelchairs in too. The equipment was put through its paces by disabled people and then by engineers.

People lifters

These are for people with severe disabilities who cannot transfer by themselves. We tested two types. The first are basically hoists – you get into a sling seat arrangement and are powered up from your wheelchair to the point where you

can be swung into the car. We call the second type “wheelchair systems” – ingenious arrangements whereby a special wheelchair is manoeuvred into the car to become the car seat – while you are sitting in it.

Our new report will give model-by-model details, but

here are some general findings.

- None of the hoists or wheelchair systems could be used independently by most people. If you were agile enough to use any of this equipment without help you probably wouldn't need it. Not only do you need help to use this equipment, but your helper will need some strength too.
- All the equipment worked. But not for everyone, and not in every car. A certain amount of head and neck movement was needed for all the hoists – not easy with cars of quite limited room.
- Comfort and support depended on the shape, size and material of the sling. Some

Hyundai has been voted the UK Automotive Company of the Year 1999 by the European Institute of Transport Management and heralded as “one of the top players in the UK automotive industry”.

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There's also the option of a 3-speed fully automatic transmission, or (to special order) a 5-speed semi-automatic transmission, still with no advance payment on the Motability Scheme†

For full details on the Hyundai 'Motability' Scheme and the exciting Hyundai range of coupés, hatchbacks, saloons and estates, call Hyundai free on 0800 981 981 or visit our website on www.hyundai-car.co.uk.



The Hyundai Atoz.

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Testers liked the Carony chair

hoists were let down by their slings. We would like to see slings which are interchangeable between models.

- Most could be removed from the car without leaving holes which would send the second-hand value of your car plummeting.

The hoists varied a lot in price – we would have paid between £765 and nearly £2,000 for them last year. Some were less obtrusive than others and gave you more room. Rooftop hoists are exposed to the weather (and vandals), but took up no more room and were easy to fix. The two tested were pumped up by hand. The interior hoists tested were powered. Look for a comfortable sling and a hoist which gives you enough room to get into your car without too much bending.

Dignity at a price

Although some hoists were less obtrusive than others, many users did not like them at all. “You feel like a fish in a net,” was one comment.

Our testers preferred wheelchair systems because they were more dignified. Apart from the feeling of helplessness, slings rumpled clothes and were not liked by

Hyundai Car (UK) Ltd., St John's Place, Easton Street, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 1NL.

*Hyundai Atoz (manual) at £6,949 and Atoz+ (manual) at £7,949, on the road including 12 months Road Fund Licence (not applicable to Higher Rate Mobility Allowance). Optional 5-speed semi-automatic transmission £470, 3-speed automatic transmission £699. †Subject to status. 12,000 miles per annum. Written details on request.

*This is the trademark of Motability: Registered Charity No.299745

Motability



women wearing skirts. Some people did not like the close physical handling involved. The wheelchair systems avoided most of these problems. The testers preferred the Carony chair, which was the cheaper of the two we looked at and was fairly simple to use. Once in the car, it looked very much like an ordinary car seat.

Helpers found wheelchair systems easier too, although they needed some bending, reaching and dexterity.

One drawback is that you may need another wheelchair for everyday use. But the biggest disadvantage is the hefty price tag. One of the wheelchair systems cost over £5,000 and the other £3,760. Our report gives details of help towards the cost, but there are not many sources of funding.

An alternative is a specially converted vehicle which you can drive into in your wheelchair. But this is an even more expensive option.

Getting a chair into a car

Some people don't need any equipment at all to get their wheelchair into a car. For those who don't have the strength for this, we tested the crane-type arrangements which lift chairs into the back of a car, and more complicated devices which put your chair on the car roof. At the other extreme, we looked at simple racks for carrying chairs on the back of your car.

The hoists

All the hoists worked in about the same way. You swing out the hoist's arm and hook the wheelchair on to the end of a cord. The chair is lifted by the hoist's motor. With most you swing the chair into the car by hand, although some hoists do this under power too.

All the hoists worked and everybody who tried them managed to get a wheelchair into the car. You really have to be able to stand for a short

time while using the equipment. We had some minor quibbles – some had easier controls than others and some of the clips used to attach the wheelchairs were awkward.

Our group of testers were mostly happy with the hoists they tried.

Not so our engineers. They thought some of the equipment was crude. It did the job and most of it was durable, but it

- An easy-to-use hook which won't come off if the lifting cord is slack. One could be used with just one hand.
- An arm long enough to keep the wheelchair away from the bumper.
- Hoists which can be removed from the car fairly easily.
- The right kind of control for you. Handheld remote controls were liked by some people, but those with limited balance

wheelchair in after you have transferred. They come at a price – we would have paid from £1,350 to £4,000 for those we tested.

You transfer into the car, fold your wheelchair and remove the footrests. At the push of a button, the hoist is lowered from the roof. You hook on the wheelchair and it is hoisted up. Four of the five rooftop hoists lifted the wheelchair into a

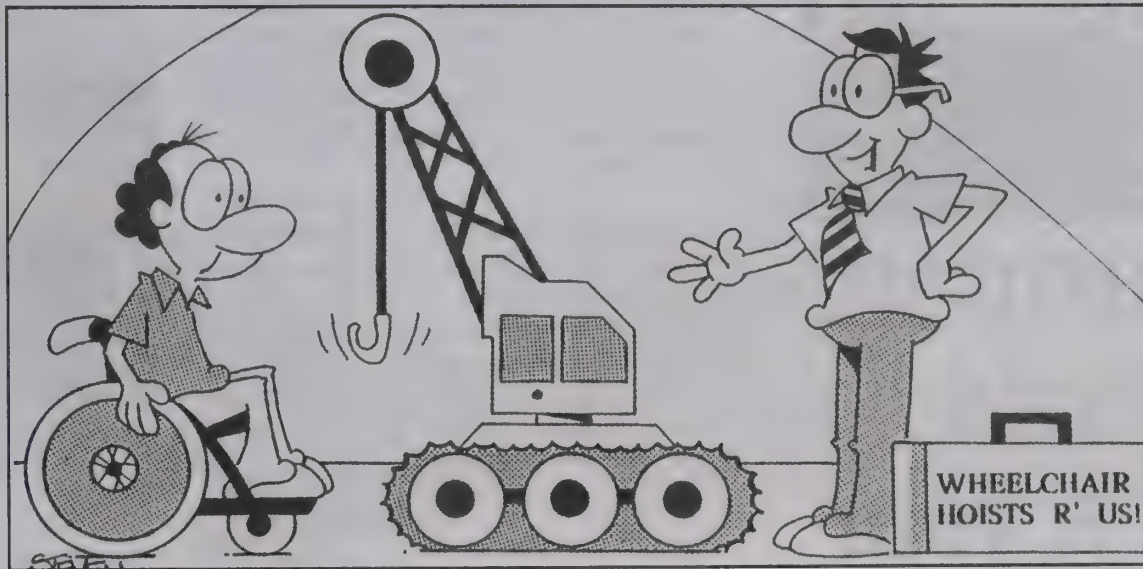
found some electrics were exposed during the operation cycle – not dangerous, but damp could stop the hoist working. The fuses on one model were out of reach at one point in its cycle and would be impossible to reach if the hoist stopped working at that point. One failed several times during testing.

Wheelchair racks

These were much simpler and cheaper – those we bought cost from £35 to £155. But most were not designed for disabled people – a lot of lifting and fixing was involved. Also, your wheelchair gets wet in bad weather and will probably get quite dirty.

Most were similar to bicycle racks. You do have to lift the folded chair on to the rack. One brand – the Chairack – was liked more than the others because you did not have to do this. It was easy to fit to a tow bar and could be used with only one hand.

People Lifters and Getting a Wheelchair into a Car are available from the end of June from Rica, 24 Highbury Crescent, N5 1RX, tel: 0171-704 5200.



STEVE MORGAN

"Yes, I admit, it does look a bit like a crane from some angles!"

was obtrusive and often over-heavy. We found some poor quality control and design. The following improvements would be simple to make.

- It is easy to hit your head on the boom of the crane – padding would help.
- The electrical wiring was always safe, but it was not always substantial enough – when the battery is low, the hoist could slow down or stop.
- For such simple equipment we found far too many niggling faults. There were misfeeds, pulley wear and frayed ropes. Look for:
- Hoists which take up little space in the car.
- Light components which can be removed easily – some had to be dismantled when not in use or they would swing about.
- Light arms which are not cumbersome to move.

liked controls which were fixed so they could hold on.

The hoists for manual chairs we tested cost between £320 and nearly £500. Those for powered chairs cost between £450 and £1,100.

Rooftop hoists

These are the only option if you want to be independent, can't put the wheelchair into the back of the car or can't pull the

protective box. With one, the box was lowered and you pushed the wheelchair into it. One carried the wheelchair in the open air, although you could put a cover over it. Most had handheld controls.

All were easy to use, even for people with severe disabilities, although you would need some dexterity and ability to reach.

But again, the engineers were less than impressed. They

The equipment tested

PEOPLE LIFTERS
Wheelchair systems
Carony; Constable Carchair.

Roof-mounted hoists
Hoyer Kartop Lifter S-KT; Parry hydraulic car-top hoist.

Interior-mounted hoists
Meyland Smith Auto Person Lift; Milford Person lift; Petri & Lehr Auto-Lifter; Techlift TL 3200.

WHEELCHAIR HOISTS (manual chairs)
Autochair; Gosling lightweight hoist; Hodge Mobility Mk 1; Reselco; Techmobility.

WHEELCHAIR HOISTS (powered chairs)
Adaptacar; Autochair; Brono Mobility Europe ASL-325; Cowal; Design and Innovation; Hodge Mobility Mk II; KC Mobility Services; Mobility Conversions; Pride Hercules 3000; Techmobility Midi hoist.

Rooftop systems
Autochair; Braun Chair Topper; Copal Wymo; Cowal GZ 91; Okey Chairbox.

Wheelchair racks
Carrychair; Chairack; Easicarry Model E; Easicarry Model M; Pegasus.

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DN competition



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Like all other Chairman conversions, it is available under the Motability scheme.

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Chairman Kangoo, free, for a long weekend – Friday 12 noon to Monday 12 noon.

To enter, just fill in the form below.

Gowrings Mobility, founded in the 1960s, was the first company to produce a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. All Chairman cars have low, ramped access, some with rear lowering suspension; a wheelchair safety securing system; good visibility for the wheelchair user; and seats for other family members. The conversions have a three-year parts and labour warranty. Gowrings is accredited as a First-Class Supplier to the Motability Grants Department.

Win a Chairman Kangoo

How to enter

Here are six benefits of a Chairman. Using the boxes, number your order of preference 1-6.

- Three-year warranty ☐
- Good visibility ☐
- Comfortable ride ☐
- Ease of access ☐
- Safe wheelchair fixings ☐
- Stylish appearance ☐

Now, in no more than 30 words, explain here, or on another sheet of paper, what you would do on your Best Day Out if you had a Chairman car at your disposal.

Competition is for passenger w/chair users only. Staff/associates of Gowrings Mobility & DN and current Chairman owners are not eligible. Judges' decision is final.

Name..... W/chair passenger?.....
Address

..... Phone:

My driver is over 21 and has a clean driving licence. I will take care of the vehicle and report loss/damage. I am willing to take part in limited publicity and photos.

(Signature)..... Send your entry to Linda Ling, Gowrings Mobility Ltd, Freepost, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5ZW. Closing date: 6 August, 1999.



Did you know?



There is help available for disabled drivers, Rod Hermeston finds

DID YOU KNOW? The *Outdoor Transport* guide, published by the Disability Information Trust, has information on equipment for disabled travellers. £10 tel: (01865) 227592.

DID YOU KNOW? The Disabled Drivers' Association (DDA) has launched a new leaflet *Parking – help, hints and tips for disabled drivers and disabled passengers*. It is free to DDA members and £2.50 to others. DDA membership is £10 for single members. Tel: (01508) 489449.

DID YOU KNOW? A new self-catering bungalow has opened at Banstead Mobility Centre for visitors using the centre in Surrey. Banstead offers advice on adaptations and transfer into vehicles, driving lessons for disabled people and other useful information. The bungalow is fully accessible and has four bedrooms. It costs from £15 per person per night for disabled people and their carers. Tel: 0181-770 1151. (See page 19 for our special Banstead offer.)

DID YOU KNOW? The Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service (MAVIS) provides information, assessments, advice on adaptations and the chance to test vehicles. Tel: (01344) 661000. Banstead and MAVIS are members of the Forum of Mobility Centres, which has 13 sites around the UK. Contact Banstead Mobility Centre (tel: 0181-770 1151) for your nearest one.

DID YOU KNOW? Orange Badge holders get a discount on AA services. The AA's *Guide for the Disabled Traveller* is free to members. Tel: 0800-262 050.

DID YOU KNOW? The RAC offers RAC Response, a rescue service for Orange Badge holders. Prices start from £74. Tel: 0800-029 029.

DID YOU KNOW? Motorists who get their vehicle through Motability can save by paying via the Constant Lease scheme, which allows a fixed weekly payment over three years instead of increasing it in line with the Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

DLA helpline
tel: 0345-123 456 or for Northern Ireland, tel: (01232) 336556.

DID YOU KNOW? Scope Select has been launched by Scope and AXA Insurance. It offers non-discriminatory car insurance. Tel: 0345-573 147.

DID YOU KNOW? The Disabled Drivers' Motor Club offers information and 15 per cent off most RAC schemes. Subscription is £10 a year. Tel: (01832) 734724.

DID YOU KNOW? RADAR has three motoring leaflets, covering assessments, driving lessons and more. £5 for all three. Tel: 0171-250 3222.

DID YOU KNOW? Two of the Sto-Eazy Traveller trailers for wheelchairs have been revamped. They cost £950 and £995. Tel: (01603) 720246.



Orange aid: discounts are given to badge holders

DID YOU KNOW? The AutoClutch, supplied by Vehvac, lets drivers operate the clutch via a button on the gear lever. It costs £695. Tel: (01732) 868080.

DID YOU KNOW? Jim Doran Hand Controls imports the Monarch Mark 1-A radial hand control which moves parallel to the steering wheel. It costs £450. Tel: (01203) 460833.

DID YOU KNOW? Summit Accessories produces the Kerb/Blindspot Mirror (£1.99) and the Pathfinder (£8.99), a lamp for marking obstacles. Tel: (01295) 270770.

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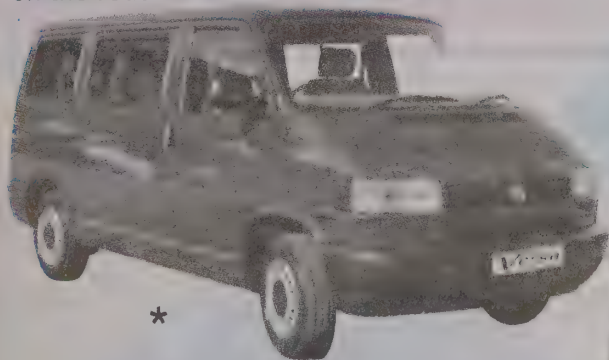
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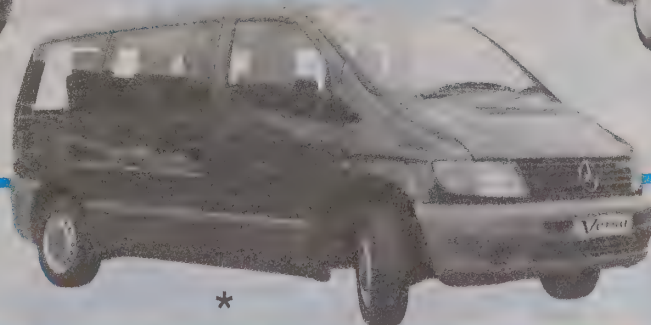


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Terms and conditions

Send your name and address on a postcard marked Landeez or Banstead, to *Disability Now*, address on page 3. Closing date 30 July. No cash alternatives. UK entrants only. Entrants must be over 18, and agree to terms and conditions. Not open to DN staff or associates. The editor's decision is final.

Conventional wheelchairs may take you around your home or office, but what do you do if you really want to go out and about?

Well, maybe this is the answer. Natural Access produce the all-terrain wheelchair (above and right). And thanks to the Wheelchair Corporation, we are able to give one, worth £1,900, to a lucky DN reader.

This striking wheelchair is highly versatile. It can carry over 325 pounds, but only weighs 37 pounds. It can be conveniently disassembled without tools, making it ideal for travel.

They've even thought about the fact that you may need to transfer to or from another wheelchair. So the seat height is 19in, the conventional wheel-

Other options for the Landeez wheelchair include a self-propelled hand cycle system, interchangeable street wheels, and tyre nets for use in snow, (not included in the offer).

The Wheelchair Corporation can be contacted at Incmoor House, Chelmarsh, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 6AZ, tel: (01746) 861940.

Going back to school

DN's motoring theme continues. There may be some of you who would like to try your hand at driving a car for the first time, or try learning some new skills.

And thanks to Banstead Mobility Centre, you may be able to. The centre is celebrating its 18th anniversary on 10 June, and has offered a lucky DN reader a free driving lesson and an overnight stay in the new wheelchair accessible bungalow. There's a second prize of an overnight stay in the bungalow as well.

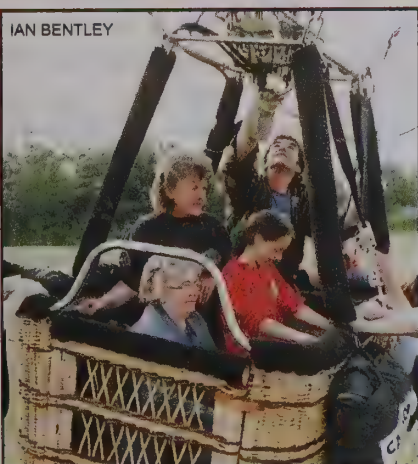
The bungalow has six bedrooms, all with ensuite toilet/shower rooms. There are



two adjustable beds, and other equipment can be provided if notice is given.

If you want to try driving lessons and make use of the accessible accommodation, contact Banstead Mobility Centre, Damson Way, Fountain Drive, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR, tel: 0181-770 1151.

What's in DN next month?



- **THE GOVERNMENT'S NEW DEAL**
One year on, how many more disabled people are in jobs?
- **SHOPMOBILITY**
Need a scheme in your area? Here's how to start one up.
- **MOBILITY ROAD SHOW**
Highlights of this year's show from DN's motoring correspondent David Griffiths.
- **OUT AND ABOUT (2)**
More fun days out ideas for adults and kids.

Plus the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 28 July.

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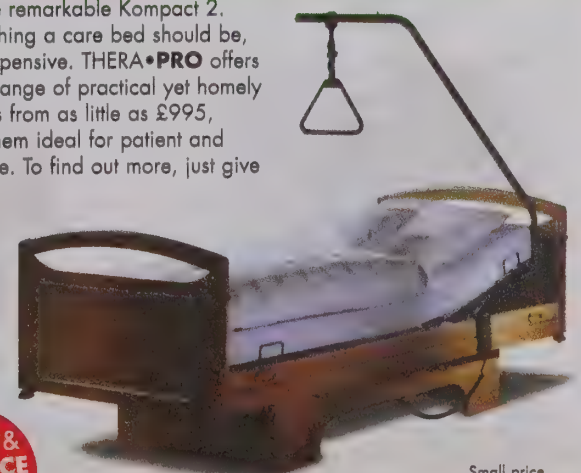
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Splash of colour: Impact, by Carole Pirie

LESLEY RANDALL

Picture this

If art's your thing and you find yourself in the south east, the Artability One to One exhibition is on until 24 July. The show includes work by 30 artists, including this painting by Carole Pirie.

Carole studied art in the 1960s and developed multiple sclerosis in 1988. She resumed painting in 1997 with the help

of Artability. The show's other disabled artists include Alison Lapper, Bryen Miller, Philip Ridler and Gillian Shaw.

Artability South East, tel: (01892) 519920.

The exhibition is at The Studio, Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Chapel Road, Worthing, tel: (01903) 239999.

Television

Paul Darke



The good, the bad and the ugly of disability imagery were much on our screens in the last month.

The good was a party political broadcast for the Socialist Labour Party (all channels, 28 May). It was great to see a severely disabled guy with thalidomide articulating coherently on serious political issues.

The bad was *Nightclub* (BBC 2, 24 May), a series that sneered at its subjects. This episode followed a wheelchair user looking for romance and was made with an arrogance that demeaned the disabled man represented.

The ugly was *Maisie Raine* (BBC 1, June 4). In the first episode of the new series of this police drama, a woman pretended to be "deaf and dumb". The way the character was treated and used dramatically was insulting.

Disability was, however, extremely well covered in *Home Ground: A Difficult Diagnosis* (BBC2, 1 June) and *Equinox: Curse of the Phantom Limbs* (C4, 7 June). These were two documentaries that explored the medical profession's lack of knowledge about disability and showed how disabled people (epileptics and amputees respectively) are exploited, betrayed and objectified by medicine.

Which brings us to the BBC's DPU programme *The Disabled Century*, a series exploring disabled people's lives over the past 85 years (BBC 2, 27 May, 3 & 10 June) and *Me and My ...* (BBC 2, 7-11 June). *Me and My ...* comprised four vignettes of disabled people looking at their aids: wheelchair, personal assistant, etc. Both series were amazing and must be praised for their bravery and truly innovative style. *The Disabled Century* (and *Me and My ...*) used, ironically, every possible cliché and stereotype available to them to articulate the view that the Social Model is wrong and that the Medical Model of disability is fine as long as people are nicer to us.

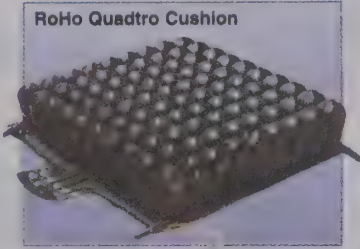
To make programmes in the late 1990s in 1970s style was indeed challenging and witty – it made me laugh. And, significantly, they could only have been commissioned by a man of the bravery and talent of Ian Macrae at the Disability Programmes Unit.



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Theatre

Lani Parker

Dan Batten

In *Scary Antics*, the Shysters – a company of ten actors with learning disabilities – talk about those aspects of the lives of young adults with learning difficulties that are rarely seen, including sex, drugs and violent relationships.

The central character is a young woman in search of love, played by an actress with Down's Syndrome. Simply by taking herself seriously on stage, she challenges the stereotypes, but this production also shows that people with learning difficulties can act.

The male actors' personalities often showed through, particularly at funny moments. But I would have liked the women to have had an opportunity to shine more – they were too often portrayed as bystanders or victims of men.

Go and see this play. Think about it. And watch this space – expect even better things from this company in future.

Scary Antics is on tour in Manchester, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Sandwell, London and Edinburgh. Tel: (01203) 846713.

Selkie Bride is another resounding success for the Strathcona Theatre Company.

It tells of a young man sent to live with relatives in Ireland in "a time gone by". There he is befriended by tinkers, who help him come to terms with his mother's death. They also show him that his learning difficulty is no reason to be excluded from a happy family environment or, eventually, from love with the mystical Selkie Bride.

The minimal production and haunting music suit the show perfectly. Actors played several roles each with confidence. The show flows at a fair old pace, keeping its young audience entertained at all times.

The occasional attempt at an Irish accent should be avoided, but this is my only gripe. The simple message that everyone has a right to be happy is subtly conveyed and this young-at-heart person loved the show.

In Deptford, 28 June - 2 July (tel: 0181-692 4446), Kilburn, 6-10 July (0171-328 1000) and York, 13 July (01904 642582).



Vermillion vista: David Hockney's "9 Canvas Study of the Grand Canyon", 1998

RICHARD SCHMIDT

Art

Gioya Steinke

I always enjoy all of the Royal Academy's *Summer Exhibition*, where visually impaired visitors can touch some of the exhibits. Starting in the courtyard, I explored "Taurus", the huge mass by Tony Cragg. It felt like a wet curling slug in the rain.

Although I cannot truly comment on all the paintings displayed – what is a highly coloured blob to my damaged

eye could be a masterpiece to another – I did enjoy David Hockney's "Grand Canyon" panoramic paintings. There is seating so one can sit and stare.

The pieces that can be touched have Braille labels on them, and a large-print list of these can be obtained from the reception desk. I asked for the free services of the education volunteer guides, which were really helpful and necessary for me. It's good to share views with a sighted person.

The best "touch"? Could be the smooth, sensual touch of "La Sposa" (Braille no.3)

depicting the hands of a woman holding a veil in front of her body, with a thigh just emerging. A telling touch indeed.

If you can lean over the platform where John Maine's granite "Escarpment" is placed, it is worth touching the texture, tracing the twisted lines and noting the lovely pink colour.

For further information on accessibility and facilities, contact Dennis Barnham, tel: 0171-300 5864. The exhibition runs until 15 August.

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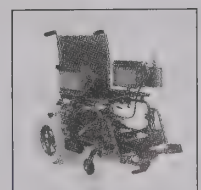
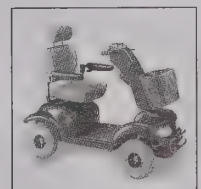
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Can you cut it?

How easy is it to make it in hairdressing? Rod Hermeston finds out



Trainee trimmer Becky McColl

Hairdressing could be the perfect job if you're creative and want to help people feel good. And a little imagination can go a long way to overcome the problems of what is, after all, a physical job.

High stools can help if you have difficulty standing for long periods, while some disabilities, such as diabetes, may not affect your ability to do the job at all.

The Hairdressing Training Board (HTB) has been looking at ways of making things easier for disabled people. It has launched a national campaign

which will include raising employers' awareness of equal opportunities. Deaf people can already get the full National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) now that they are allowed to use minicomms and typetalk instead of the telephone during training.

Andrew Darby, director of policy at the HTB, says there is also evidence that many dyslexic people work in the industry. The HTB wants all trainees to be assessed for dyslexia, to make it easier to meet their needs.

Becky McColl is a trainee hairdresser with dyslexia. "I got into hairdressing because there is not much reading and writing," she says. She is a trainee at Paul Alan Hair Art in Warwick but also studies one day a week. "At college there are diagrams to show how to apply colours and perms," Becky adds.

Katie Selmes is deaf and uses British Sign Language (BSL). With the help of a communicator, she gained an NVQ level two and parts of level three at Thurrock College in Grays, Essex. She got her first job at top chain Toni & Guy and then moved to Trade Secret in West Thurrock.

"I explain to customers straight away that I am deaf," she says. "I ask them to slow down if they talk too fast. If they want a certain style I ask them to look at pictures. If it is just a cut, I can use basic sign language to find out what length they want. When I am

colouring and perming I ask my boss to write down information for me."

The general secretary of the National Hairdressers' Federation, Ray Seymour, says there are practical problems. Though he supports disabled people working in the industry, he says: "Hand/eye co-ordination is important. If someone has a disability which prevents that, hairdressing is not going to be for them."



Another satisfied customer: Katie Selmes (top) gives the finishing touches

Colour-blind people would also struggle, he says, as might wheelchair users. People with disfigurements could face negative attitudes from clients, he says.

Of course it would be illegal for a company with more than 15 employees to reject someone for this last reason.

As always, if you think you can cut it, have a go. Who knows? You might be head and shoulders above the rest.

To the top

Nina Pottell is a trainer for national chain Regis Hairstylists.



A model job: Nina Pottell

She went into hairdressing after losing her hearing through meningitis.

She has got round her problems by asking people to speak clearly and look at her when they speak. Since starting at Regis six years ago her career has really taken off.

"I've been training other stylists full-time for two years now," she says, "and I'm responsible for 110 salons in London and the south east. It is so fulfilling to give people fantastic hair cuts."

How to get ahead

The minimum qualification for a stylist is NVQ level two, but advanced stylists would aim for level three.

There are several training routes:

- * Full-time training in a further education college.
- * In-house training and assessment at one of the larger salon groups.
- * National Traineeships and Modern Apprenticeships, where trainees work in salons and also go out to college on day release. The Government makes a contribution to the training costs.

Contact the Hairdressing Training Board, tel: (01302) 380000.

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'I am loved and life is good'

As Rose-Mary Gower teaches her son John-Paul at home, she finds that letters to famous people are a great help

John-Paul came to our family in April 1986 at the age of 13 months. His birth parents had given him up for adoption when he was born, feeling that they could not meet the demands of a Down's syndrome child. John-Paul could not have fitted in better had he been born to us.

He was a really cute little boy. He had been well stimulated in his foster home and thrived on attention.

Our daughters were thrilled as, with their help, he achieved various milestones in his development. He was happy to be shown off to all their friends, dressed up, teased and generally made to suffer the fate of a young brother.

At three John-Paul joined the local playgroup, and at four he moved to the local primary school with his playgroup chums. In 1990 we moved to north Wales and decided that John-Paul should be home-educated. You do not have to be a trained teacher to educate a child at home, although the local education authority may inspect from time to time.

I found that a fairly strict routine was the only way to organise things. I like to start by 8.30am and devote about an hour to one-to-one teaching. I

then give John-Paul his assignments for the day and I can get on with my chores while he works. We take him to museums, stately homes and other places of interest.

Writing letters to famous people helps John-Paul's handwriting. He also tries to write for magazines sometimes and last term he wrote a millennium prayer.

John-Paul went through puberty early, at 11. He was bewildered by the changes in his body and the inevitable mood swings. We still make jokes about a "hormone getting him" when he is grumpy. However, his happy nature soon prevails and he announces "I am beaming again, Mum."

Today, at 14, he is polite and well behaved. Although his speech can sometimes be a little hard to understand, John-Paul is very clear when he is reading.

He does things that other teenagers might not get a chance to do. Last year, for example, our local MP arranged a trip for him around the Palace of Westminster.

Like most young teenage lads, he has only a passing acquaintance with the face flannel and I am forced to scrub off the worst of the grime from time to time. He is also

reluctant to go to bed and even more reluctant to get out of it in the morning.

We feel very fortunate to have adopted John-Paul. He is a loving and happy boy who is liked and loved by us all. Truly his extra chromosome has brought us much happiness. Without it he would not have been our son.

Write Away is a penfriend club for people with special needs. A one-off membership fee of £2 is payable by children up to the age of 18; adults pay £5 and there is a reduced rate for multiple memberships. Tel: 0181-964 4225.



Writing off, not written off: Rose-Mary Gower teaches John-Paul herself

Down's syndrome is okay. I don't find it a problem, although I find some things hard, like buttons and laces. I am really happy. I do all sorts of exciting things like going to the theatre, concerts and the cinema. My favourite sports on tv are motor racing, cricket and football. I am not very good at sport, but I am okay at boules. I love playing at Nintendo. I can beat most people, especially my Dad. He sulks when he loses, so he does a lot of sulking.

Mum teaches me at home and she is a slave driver. As I find handwriting hard, she suggested that I wrote letters to famous people. I love getting post and most people reply. I have three scrapbooks full. I have letters from the Queen, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope.

I am loved and life is good.

John-Paul Gower

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• What's on

The Disabled Drivers' Association will host a Youth Conference, Telford, 10-11 July. Open to disabled people aged 18-30, topics include pedestrianisation, education, access and transport. Booking from the Youth Conference Organiser, The Disabled Drivers Association, National Headquarters, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX, tel: (01508) 489448, fax: (01508) 488173.

Scope, University College Northampton, English National Board for Nursing Midwifery and Health Visiting host *Creating Effective Partnerships*, 14 July, Northampton. The conference will look at ways of improving the relationship between professionals and families of disabled children in the area of delivering support services. Call Nicky Daniels, tel: (01908) 243619, e-mail: Nicky.Daniels@northampton.ac.uk

The British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) will hold its 1999 conference *Frontiers in Understanding Learning Disability*, 13-15 September, Westminster. This year's conference looks at the benefit of research and how it can enhance good practice. Booking forms from Liz Howells, BILD, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 3PP, tel: (01562) 850251.

• Information

The Disability Directory gives details of orange badge parking locations, helplines, business listings, editorial from disability related charities, all listed by regions (there are 15 regions in total, including Ireland). It is printed in large print to make it easier to read. For a copy call Disability Directory, (freephone) tel: 0800-594 2020.



Stoke on Trent City Council has created a website called *Access In Action*, to provide information on forthcoming projects, raise awareness of general disability issues and campaign for improved access. There's also space for disability groups to advertise themselves on the *Forum For Us* noticeboard. The access team can be found at www.stoke.gov.uk/accessteam/index.html



The Children's Society has produced *I'll Go First - the planning and review toolkit for use with children with disabilities*. This pack enables children/young people to express their wishes on education and care. It contains illustrated, wipe-clean boards covering everyday situations and stickers showing emotions. £60 from The Children's Society, Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL. ISBN 1 899783 13X.

• What's on

The Royal National Institute for Deaf People will hold their *Hear for All* exhibition/conference, 8-9 October, Kempton Park Racecourse, Middlesex. Key speakers, including Margaret Hodge will focus on the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) part III. Further details from, tel: 0870-605 0123, minicom: 0780-603 3007.

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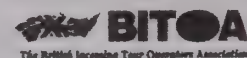
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UNISON, Britain's largest trade union, this year celebrates 25 years of working for lesbian and gay rights. UNISON believes lesbians and gay men should receive equal treatment at work, in society and in their union. Why not join us? Freephone 0800 096 96 00 or send your name, address and details of where you work to UNISON Freepost, 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ. Our National Lesbian and Gay Conference takes place on 12-14 November with pre-meetings for black and disabled lesbians and gay men in September. For further details, contact the National Lesbian and Gay Officer at the above address.



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Dear Ann

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Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or email editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Badly in need of a kick-start

Life seems to be all knocks these days. I am always in pain; my girlfriend left me when I started to use a wheelchair; I can't get a job and people keep laughing at me. Now I stay at home and don't go out unless I need to. I just can't see what's ahead of me.

I am 38 and have strong sexual feelings. I have never been sex mad, but I do miss the special parts of love. I miss the kissing and the laughter of a woman.

All I can do is wait for that kick-start to get me going again. A spark of life is all I need.

Alan, Norfolk

I catch glimpses of determination in you. I think you are on the way to giving yourself that kick-start. That's a good thing because you can be sure nobody else will. There are times in our lives when we are on our own and we have to gather strength to sort ourselves out.

Try reading your local paper and become determined to take part in an activity where you can join in with others. You are bound to have skills and ideas which can be put to good use.

You won't find people laughing at you when you are joining in. Is there a local disabled people's organisation where you could identify with other people who use wheelchairs? Mutual self-help can be very empowering.

Do let me know how you get on.

little bungalow and am much happier than I have been for a very long time.

I have had many friends helping and lots of good luck cards. I know I have done the right thing.

Sue, Oxfordshire

I am so glad to hear that you took the plunge and it was the right decision to start a new life. I especially appreciated the name of your new bungalow, "Free Spirit".

I really admire the strength you summoned up to make the break – it takes a lot of courage to do that. Having good friends is wonderful and it is encouraging to hear how they rallied round.

Care for the carer

Isn't it odd that we carers sometimes get no sympathy from those we look after. I cared for my wife who left me; I looked after my mother and now care for my father. He has attendance allowance but does not give me a penny of it.

I have to finance a car. I do all the housework, shopping and cooking, and I have to look after our large garden. I have

no social life, no friends, no girlfriend and no income.

Richard, Hampshire

However painful, it is very important that you put the past aside and see to what extent the present can be changed.

You have to look after your father obviously, but how much time does this really take? For instance, if you cook him a midday meal, can't you leave sandwiches for him instead?

You have a large garden. Have you ever considered making part of it available to someone who might want to grow their own vegetables in return for looking after the rest of it for you and your father?

I don't believe that you cannot attract friends. You have a house and a car and, while money is short, you could arrange picnics in the good weather. Have you fallen so far into the doldrums that you are not very good company at the moment? You will never be happy if you are always looking for appreciation.

Money matters

Three years ago, my son was involved in a road accident

which left him permanently disabled. I really want to help him financially, but if I gave him a large capital sum it would disqualify him from the means-tested benefits which he is currently receiving. To leave him money in my will would have the same effect.

Is there any way that I can manage to give him some money without his benefits being reduced?

Dennis, Merseyside

You can avoid disturbing your son's benefit entitlement by setting up a discretionary trust.

A fairly straightforward guide on how to do this, *Getting the most out of a trust fund*, is available.

Getting the most out of a trust fund, *Michael Dunne*, £2.50. The guide is available from Richmond Advice and Information on Disability, The Annexe Day Centre, Fortescue House, Stanley Road, Twickenham TW2 5PZ, tel: 0181-898 4225.

Care & Repair, Castle House, Kirtley Drive, Nottingham NG7 1LD, tel: 0115-979 9091.

Home help

Now that I am becoming rather more disabled, I badly need some alterations made to my home and I also need some redecorating. I receive income support and other benefits but cannot afford to pay for these things myself.

I also need help with the garden, which used to be my pride and joy. It's a real wilderness now, and some of the more fragile plants which I tended so carefully have been overcome by large plant bullies.

Will, Merseyside

You could ask your council for a Disabled Facilities Grant. Provided that you meet the criteria, a grant is mandatory for essential adaptations to give a disabled person better freedom of movement into and around the home.


Some discretionary grants are available for other work. You could find out from your local authority (or from the address below) if there is a Care and Repair scheme in your area. They are sometimes able to help people find funds.

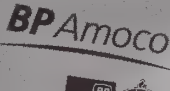
You could ask social services for a community care assessment which would let you discuss the improvements you would like to make. You could also ask about any local schemes for help with some of your gardening.


Happily ever after


Last June I wrote to say I was divorcing my husband after he had distanced himself from me because of my disability – and that after 26 years of marriage.

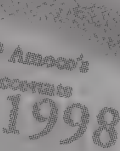
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What's new from Naidex

DN sent in the experts to spot new products at Birmingham in May



DN's New Product Showcase winner, the Seahorse Sanichair

New products for children

Reviewed by Pippa Crosby, a senior physiotherapist at Rutland House School, Nottingham

My hopes were not high for new children's equipment at

Naidex this year. But I was pleasantly surprised.

The first thing that caught my eye was the SafeSIDES 2 inflatable cot surround. Unlike the original SafeSIDES, this one has a sheet base to prevent



Many happy returns: Members of the British Paralympic team celebrate Naidex' quarter of a century

children wriggling under the sides. It costs around £600 and is supplied by Genie Products, tel: (01903) 733377.

The Genesis Orthotics stand was showing the new EB100 walking trainer which can be used for teenagers and adults. You stand inside the frame with the contraption behind you, enabling you to move without all the cumbersome equipment of standard walkers.

The EB100 has easy access thanks to a removable front bar. The price is £3,000, which covers review appointments and maintenance of equipment for one year.

Nottingham Rehab's stand featured the excellent Seahorse Sanichair, which won first prize in the DN Showcase. This highly adjustable toilet seat

certainly has a lot to offer and I have already booked a demo for my school. It costs £450 plus VAT per frame and £39.95-£49.95 plus VAT for liners. Tel: 0115-945 2345.

The Alvema ABC therapy chair is an adjustable postural support chair with many optional extras. I liked its ability to tilt the back angle, its trunk, thigh and leg supports, and the fact that comes in manual and powered versions. The chair is priced at £1,650. Rainbow Rehab, tel: (01202) 481818.

Finally, there was the new Danaid paediatric chair which comes in two sizes. Prices start at £1,895 for the manual chair and £4,495 for the powered version. For further information, call Danaid UK, tel: 0121-561 1015.

Mobility products

Reviewed by Chris Hobson, a senior occupational therapist at Disabled Living, Manchester

Naidex was advertised as showing "the latest innovations in equipment and services". Did it live up to its promise? For me, looking at mobility, the answer was yes; although the exhibition did not seem to be as big as in previous years.

I was impressed by the Jazzy Mini from Pride Mobility Products, with its turning circle of just 17in. For use even in the most confined of spaces and having the same seating options as larger models, the Jazzy Mini is suitable for users of most ages. It costs £1,995. Tel: (01869) 233100.

The Mini Traveller from Brook Mobility is advertised as the "world's smallest scooter" and it may indeed be feasible, as Brook suggests, to get a couple of scooters into a car if two people want to go out together. The vehicle costs £795. Tel: 0800-064 4454.

At the other size extreme was the latest addition to the

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Bubbly smile: Anya Harris (above), D Cowan and Jim Carrier all won champagne courtesy of The Sunday Times Wine Club. They were among 520 Naidex visitors who voted for the best new product in the Showcase awards.

Shoprider range from Days Medical, the two-seater Gemini Shoprider. The company says it allows "you and your partner to visit those favourite places together". But be aware that this is not a road or pavement vehicle – at £3,990, it is expensive for such limited use. A company spokesperson did tell me there is demand for the vehicle and that some have been sold to the Vatican. Tel: (01656) 657495.

The Landeez all-terrain wheelchair is designed for use on the beach, over rough ground and indoors. At £1,985 it is quite expensive, but the chair does carry a five-year guarantee. Wheelchair Corporation, tel: (01746) 861940. (See special offer, p. 19.)

Smith & Nephew's new Absorber Crutches (retail price not yet available) claim to reduce impact by up to 90 per cent. Tel: (01623) 754047.

MMO's new Hugo mobility chair (£1,200) is highly versatile and was also shortlisted for the DN Showcase. Tel: (01480) 831222.

And, if you need somewhere to store your scooter, chair or other outdoor gear, you could treat yourself to National Mobility's Stowaway (from £995 including fitting), a handy lockable storage box. Tel: 0117-978 2121.



Turn on a sixpence in the Jazzy Mini from Pride Mobility Products
POST STUDIOS

Home equipment

Reviewed by Tara Flood, an information officer at RADAR I had great expectations for Naidex this year and it was indeed good to see more disabled people there. However, I did feel the exhibition still focused far too much on the needs of healthcare professionals rather than those of people with disabilities.

I was looking for new home equipment and I did, eventually, find a number of

new products. The first thing that caught my eye was the "No Hands" computer mouse imported from the USA by Techcess. It consists of two foot pads, one for the cursor and one for clicking. It is expensive at £165, but it can be used with a standard external hand-use mouse and voice-controlled or synthesised software. Tel: (01455) 213708.

A product which would be a real possibility for me is the new BT Big Button telephone.

It doesn't shout "disability" and the price is right – £24.99 to buy or £4.99 a quarter to rent. Tel: 0800-800 150.

It's great to see companies moving away from white for the bathroom. Gordon Ellis (tel: 01332 810504) does a range of coloured bathroom equipment priced £13.99-£16.99, and Go Independent (tel: 0151-920 4627) produce grab rails and shower seats priced £20 to £250.

I also liked the new Chair Bed by Theraposture which helps people get into and out of bed unaided. £1,995 (excl. VAT). Tel: 0800-834 654.

The Stowaway hoist from Sunrise Medical is good if you're short on space – it can be folded. The Stowaway costs from £565. Tel: (01384) 446688.

Tile Deck Showers' level-entry shower tray (prices start from £290) and Eurocare's shower trays (a wide range of prices for different fittings) were both shortlisted in the Showcase.

Tile Deck Showers, tel: (01886) 832855; Eurocare Showers, tel: (01222) 881051. Warren Hooker's EVO bath lift, priced £565, was also shortlisted. Tel: (01202) 623000.

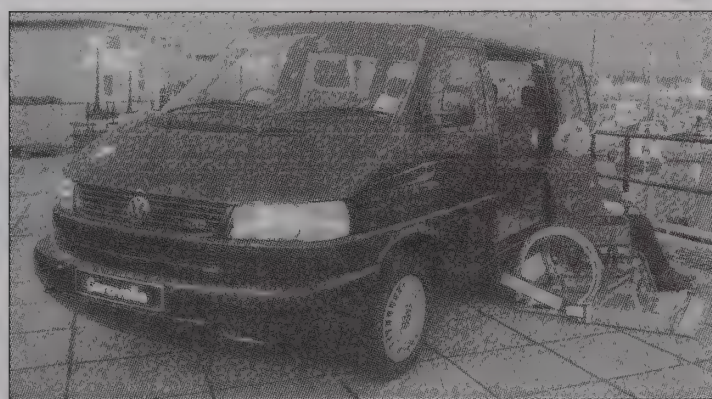
DC Doors' clever Bi-Fold Flush Door, which opens from the centre and gives access to very restricted spaces in the home, is quite nifty. The door with frame costs £535. Tel: (01689) 846200.

ORO UK's Millennium Sleep System, which certainly sounds pretty high tech, is an interactive bed which claims to ease back problems. Prices range from about £2,000 to £3,800. Tel: (01753) 664375.



BT's Big Button phone doesn't shout "disability"

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Contact Paul Cassidy or David Reid for brochures or a demonstration. Invatravel is a long established company with years of experience providing for the needs of people with disabilities. Conversions are to Volkswagen compatible design and are recognised converters for VW.

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Parents telling it like it is



Bigger than the Sky – *Disabled Women on Parenting* is a highly readable anthology of poetry

and prose. Its contributors offer different perspectives on parenting (including adoptive parenting, shared parenting, single and lesbian parenting and the positive decision not to become a parent), giving a vivid picture of the varied experience of parenting as a disabled woman – the joys as well as the frustrations.

The anthology takes its title from one of the contributors, Adina Friedan, who tells her son she loves him “bigger than the sky”, and her experience is common to most of the mothers talking here.

The voice of fathers is, of course, absent, but this does

not read exclusively as a “woman’s” book. It has much to say to everyone.

One of its greatest strengths is the honesty and immediacy of the writers’ voices. Their view of parenting is refreshingly – and often painfully – honest and avoids the comfortable stereotypes. The writing challenges traditional assumptions and will shatter preconceptions. Contributors give poignant accounts of the reactions of family, friends, doctors and support services to them becoming parents. Some writers highlight the difficulty they experienced in exercising their right to be parents. There

are accounts of children’s reactions to their parent’s impairments and of how impairment can make a positive contribution to parenting.

I would expect most disabled parents reading this anthology will laugh and smile – or indeed wince – in recognition of experiences shared.

I believe the book will also

have a great deal to say to anyone who is not a parent or does not have experience of disability. Its contributors do not rely on easy notions of parenting, but tell it like it is and do so with pride.

Rachel Wilson

Edited by Michele Wates & Rowen Jade, The Women’s Press, £8.99.

Special offer

If you like the sound of *Bigger than the Sky*, The Women’s Press is giving seven readers of *DN* the chance to win a free copy of the anthology. Send your name and address on a postcard marked “*Bigger than the Sky*” to *DN* at the address on page 3. The first seven postcards will win a copy.

DOWN’S SYNDROME

If someone in your family has a learning disability (‘mental handicap’), he or she needs security – not just now, but in the future when you’re no longer here. Mencap, the UK’s leading charity for people with learning disabilities, is offering a FREE booklet called *Leaving money by will to people with learning disabilities*. The booklet explains how you can secure your dependant’s future and how to avoid pitfalls such as unintentionally reducing their entitlement to benefits.

To receive your FREE copy, just write to:

Marion Young, Mencap, Room 119
FREEPOST, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1B 1AA.

Or phone FREE, quoting reference: 119

0500 243444

Mencap (The Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults). A registered charity No. 222377

Animal magic



The only things I know about the animal world were what I gleaned during my childhood,

which I shared with a variety of dogs and my mother’s Persian cat, Miss Molly. My only real interest in animals since then has been taking my children to the zoo and making sure my oldest son doesn’t have too much contact because of his asthma, so I approached Bernie Graham’s *Creature Comforts* with some trepidation. To my amazement, I was held captivated from beginning to end.

The book is a witty and often emotional look at the use of animals to ease physical and psychological problems. Bernie Graham explores many aspects of the use of animals in

complementary medicine, including the scepticism of some professionals and, sometimes, the desperation of individuals and their families.

In this eye-opening and engrossing book, he shows – to me at least – that animals and humans have a great deal to offer each other and that this kind of holistic therapy should not be ignored or underestimated.

What is more, *Creature Comforts* is a thoroughly enjoyable read, not just for those with a disability – for all of us. I defy anyone to read it and not be moved by his stories.

Simon Weston

Simon and Schuster, £9.99.

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Tel: 01626 853050

Book news

Gentle Giant is Wendy Robinson’s story as the mother of an autistic child. *Gentle Giant* is probably not the best bet for the beach, but it will be informative to anyone who is interested in autism and, equally, to anyone who knows nothing about it. The book is not just a tearjerker – it concludes with addresses, advice and suggestions for further reading. *Element, £9.99.*

Christopher Reeve’s *Still Me* (*DN, June 1998*) is now out in paperback. It has a new afterword in which, still assuming the Superman role, Reeve reiterates his high hopes for recovery. *Arrow, £6.99.*

A Lollipop through the Railings is the story of Enid Farnell, who had a road accident in 1992. The book is not just about her resulting disability – it also sifts through memories of childhood in Durham. *The Pentland Press, £10.*

Your stars



By *DN's*
astrologer
Marion
Stanton

CANCER (23 June-23 July)
Someone close will provide you with an opportunity. Be careful about accepting as there may be a sting in the tail.

LEO (24 July-23 Aug)
The sun in Leo opposes Neptune then Uranus. The full moon opposes you. Dreams may become real or wild goose chases. Think before you act.

VIRGO (24 Aug- 23 Sept)
As Venus enters your sign, relationships look good. Listen to advice. Some inspiration at work can head you up the ladder.

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)
Financially you're not out of the woods. Keep a tight rein on your purse. Take advice. Friends really are looking out for your interests.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)
High energy and libido bode well for a holiday with someone you care for, or forwarding a project in work. You could do both, but beware of hidden criticism.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)
Listen rather than talk. Long term changes will lead to deeper self-awareness, but nothing will happen overnight. July is a good month for a little self-examination.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)
Someone who appears not to have noticed may come around. Be enthusiastic but don't suffocate them. This relationship can deepen if you allow space and sharing.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)
The full moon in Aquarius follows turbulence in relationships earlier in the month, but it will pass. Don't let it ruin developments in your life.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)
Tension in a close relationship can be eased by facing it head on. You won't make it disappear, but solutions rather than arguments are more constructive.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)
Talk but don't debate. Be a team player: you need help for the success of a project. You may have to make adjustments to accommodate others.

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)
Problems in relationships may subside but not with work colleagues. Take a break. Those at work may have disappeared by the time you return.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)
A close relationship has tension. Don't argue - it won't help. Keep your head down rather than enter the fray.

Scribble pad

Answers on page 30
COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS

Complete the crossword and send it to Dave Dunn, Leonard Cheshire (LC), 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4QD. Judges decision is final. Not open to LC or DN staff and associates. Entry deadline: 23 July 1999.

Candid Dan dids



Dan sees the footie season out in style

Returning from Lanzarote, Jon and I decided the party wasn't over. The race for the Premiership was reaching the end, with our team (Man "U") looking to seal a win.

Being the dilligent fans we are, it was our duty to continue the ordeal of sitting in a bar to give our boys a final push. Damn! To add an element of danger, we watched the final game of the season on my home territory: the enemy territory of Arsenal! Grown men cried at the final whistle, whilst we suppressed our glee. What a day. Mum was also present and later expressed her surprise at our collective vocabulary. What could she mean? All the excitement took its toll though. After a recently intense night yours truly passed out half an hour after waking up. My lack of endurance was much mocked.

So, to charge my flattened batteries, I sent myself to Devon to see Jo. I bumped into a friend en route to Paddington who wasn't required to ask where I was going. "Puppy dog eyes equals Jo" came the cynical retort. Despite countless requests, cream tea and scones were absent but her usual mock abuse wasn't. Her friend Mark scores a "top bloke" rating, giving Jo a torrent of jibes I would have been proud of. I'm glad he has assumed my former role of sparring partner. Our behaviour was at an optimum; back of van punch-ups being the chosen activity. I never recalled her being this way in London. She should stop drinking the sheep dip, methinks.

in this prize crossword

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LEONARD CHESHIRE



ACROSS

- Picasso or Turner, for example (6)
- See 1 down (7)
- Song popular in the 1930s (4,7)
- Part of 4 across' equipment (5)
- Type of fruit (5)
- 15 & 11 down. Smelling salts (3,8)
- Grey sin (anag, 7)
- Food - in small portions? (4)
- Cashew or hazel, for example (3)
- Arouses (7)
- Fuzzy outline (4)
- Slippery creature (3)
- Pablo, Spanish writer (6)

DOWN

- 1 & 7 across. Accommodation with extra help (9,7)
- Curved sword (7)
- Depressingly (8)
- Gelatinous substance used in microbiology (4)
- See 6 down (4)
- 6 & 5 down. Do something more quickly or efficiently (4,4)
- Detail man (anag, 9)
- Claptrap or poppycock (8)
- See 15 across (8)
- Oriental (7)
- Type of bicycle, or rider (5)
- Ireland or Madagascar, for example (4)



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ENDOLITE

• Help

The British Diabetic Association (BDA) is looking to establish a network of lawyers/solicitors and their firms who have experience in challenging discriminatory employment practices and appropriate legislation. For inclusion, or further details, contact Tom Hoy, Secretary IRFD(UK), 8 Donnington Road, Willesden, London NW10 3QN, e-mail: irfduk@globalnet.co.uk

NCH Action for Children wants to hear from anyone with experience, professional or personal, of someone with a disability being approved as an adoptive parent. Please contact Doreen Bolton, Project Manager, Ashwood Project, 158 Crawley Road, Roffey, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4EU, tel: (01403) 225900.



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• Information

Disabilities Information resources (DINF) is an online resource centre set up to provide up-to-date disability news and information in text, image, audio, multimedia and combined formats. The address is <http://www.dinf.org>.

A support group for people with Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease (CMT) publishes a quarterly newsletter. Contact Margaret Reed, 121 Lavernock Road, Penarth, South Wales CF64 3QG, tel: (01222) 709537.

The National Information Forum (NIF) gives advice on good practice, effectiveness and availability of information provision. It is now on-line at www.nif.org.uk.

• Video top five

- 1. **BLAZE** (EV): Uninspiring – Wesley Snipes as tedious vampire hunter.
- 2. **RONIN** (MGM): De Niro in spectacular thriller – the best car chases ever?
- 3. **SNAKE EYES** (Buena Vista): Nicholas Cage in standard murder mystery.
- 4. **ANTZ** (CIC): Superb animation with great characters for adults and children alike.
- 5. **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY** (Fox Pathé): This crude slap stick comedy finally goes down the list.

Chart supplied by MIRB.
☐ Word-for-word captions.

• What's on

Warrington Disability Awareness Day will be held on 18 July, Walton Hall Gardens, Cheshire. Charities/support groups, service providers and manufacturers will have stands. There will also be sports competitions and family entertainment. Details from Cynthia Cowan, WDIS, Beaufort Street, Warrington WA5 1BA, tel: (01925) 240 852.

Mencap host their annual national conference under the theme "learning for life", 17-19 September, Bournemouth. There will be debates, forums and workshops, and the launch of some new educational research. Details from NG Events, 19 Station Road West, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 1ES, tel: (01449) 673723.

Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network are hosting a seminar on their work, 7 October, Devizes. This is a chance to learn how they enable users to influence planning, delivery and evaluation of community care. Full details from WCCUIN, 7 Prince Maurice Court, Hambleton Avenue, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2RT.

REHA International Trade Fair will be held 3-6 November, Dusseldorf, Germany. This is the world's largest trade fair for the disability field. 800 equipment and services exhibitors will be present. For the first time there will also be the REHA Travel Centre with travel operators, agents and hotel chains. Visitor details, tel: +49 211 4560509, exhibitor details, tel: +49 211 4560431.

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association is organising *Cuba Cycle Challenge*, a 215-mile bike ride from Trinidad to Havana. Participants need to contribute £250 and raise £2,100 in sponsorship. Trips take place in November/December 1999 and January/February 2000. Information from Colin Hill or Nick Chetwood, tel: (01539) 735080 or e-mail: colin.hill@gdba.org.uk.

DN has posters to promote its photography competition. If you could display some, please call our office, tel: 0171-619 7323.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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|------------------------------|---------------------------|
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| 7. Housing 8. Lili Marlene | 2. Cutlass 3. Dismally |
| 12. Easel 14. Mango 15. Sal | 4. Agar 5. Time 6. Save |
| 16. Syringe 18. Diet 20. Nut | 9. Laminated 10. Nonsense |
| 21. Excites 22. Blur 23. Eel | 11. Volatile 13. Eastern |
| 24. Neruda | 17. Racer 19. Isle |

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minicom: 0171-619 7332, e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Personal

LADY, 38, STUDENT and mum. Younger son has learning difficulties. Enjoys cinema, letter writing and laughter. Wlrm a caring, romantic man for friendship and maybe more. Box No. 383

I AM AN attractive 17-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. I enjoy drawing and outdoor activities. I live in Lincolnshire and would love to have a male penfriend aged 18-25 for friendship/future relationship. Please write to Box No. 384

CARING GRADUATE, YOUNG 40. 5ft 10in, slim, reasonable looking man. Warm, open personality, loving, slightly disabled. Seeks female to be happy with, any age, good personality, small build. Box No. 385

MALE, 40s, USES walking stick, seeks female penfriends/phone friends, maybe to meet on some future date. Write and I'll reply. Photo essential - they will be returned. Box No. 386

40-YEAR-OLD, fit (if a little fat) widower, caring for his son who has cerebral palsy, delighted to correspond with fully able lady, 30s, perhaps another carer. Maybe meet if close to South Bucks. Box No. 387

MY NAME IS Steph, I'm 25-years-old. I'm physically disabled with cerebral palsy. My hobbies include computers, music, cinema, ice hockey and the countryside. I seek a caring young man, 25-35, with similar interests for friendship, maybe more. Berkshire area. Box No. 388

ANOTHER WEEKEND STUCK at home? Unemployed, straight female, 30s, slight physical disability, gsoh, wlrm similar or able-bodied, n/s, with christian socialist outlook, under 50, for evenings out. Interested in arts, swimming, studying, drama, voluntary work. Can't drive; will travel. Dagenham, Essex. Box No. 389

MALE, 38, MILD disability, own home and job, with varied interests, looking for that special lady to share life's ups and downs. London/Home Counties. Box No. 390

INTELLIGENT, FUN LOVING man, 29 years old, wheelchair user, wlrm a woman for friendship and possible relationship. Has sense of humour and great personality. Interested in music and keep fit. Living in Hereford. Box No. 391

IS THERE A kind, caring, understanding lady willing to accompany a man, 30s, wheelchair user, and provide all personal care needs, on a September holiday? Meet before, suit someone looking to form a friendship. Box No. 392

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MANGAR FREESTYLE LIFTING electric wheelchair. Lifts to 3ft, 4mph. Virtually unused. £2,950. Tel: (01582) 663466 (Bedfordshire).

LARK XT MODEL 4371 3-wheel scooter. 1995, vgc, barely used. Comes with charger. New cost £1,695, sell for £800. Tel: 0181-898 6132.

LARK TRIUMPH 3-WHEEL scooter. Good condition, £400. Tel: (01494) 671958.

THREE-WHEEL ELECTRIC scooter, used once. £1,000. Tel: 0181-841 5597.

SUNRISE F55 IOC. Recaro seat, dual control, PP tyres, tilt in space. Unused, cost £5,500, offers please. Tel: (01335) 300242 (Ashbourne, Derbyshire).

WHEELCHAIR HOIST, SUIT Astra estate or similar. £150. Tel: 0114-286 3585.

LARK 4 SCOOTER. Electric swivel seat, metallic green, never used. Also batteries and charger. £1,500 ono. Tel: (01452) 331765 (Gloucestershire).

SUNRISE BEC SPRINT electric wheelchair. Puncture proof tyres, kerb climber. Good condition, recently overhauled. £695. Suntac manual wheelchair with swing-out foot plates, £350. Both suit young teenager. Also Remploy adult manual wheelchair, red. £150. Tel: (01923) 772681.

Household/family

MOTION 3ft TECHBED for sale. Little used. Cost £1,099 accept £600. Seatlift armchair, cost £745 accept £350. Overbed table £30 ono. Tel: 0181-707 9935.

BATHMASTER POWERED BATH lift, hand controller and recharger, £275. Folding 3-wheel walker, £50. Tel: 0121-705 9117.

HY-OX HYPERBARIC CHAMBER. Good condition, £15,500. Tel: (01206) 735652.

AQUAMOBILITY WALK-IN bath with shower and temperature control. Installed Sept' 1998, never used by intended recipient, now removed. Cost £4,500 installed, accept £2,750. Tel: (01334) 870147.

POWER ADJUSTABLE BED with massage mattress. Condition as new. £850 ono. Near Penrith, Cumbria. Enquiries, tel: 0181-883 3735.

ELECTRIC BED for sale. Very clean, £500 ono. Tel: (01452) 331765

ACORN STAIRLIFT, 18 MONTHS old. Righthand fitting, covering 12 steps or fewer. Less than half new price. Cost includes delivery and fitting by an Acorn engineer. £950. Tel: (01932) 220013.

Cars/vans

NISSAN PRAIRIE ESTATE 1.8 SGL. E reg, long MOT, low mileage for year, good condition. £1,450 ono. Tel: (01736) 787112.

PASSENGER SWIVEL SEATS for a variety of cars including Peugeot 806. Chair used only 6 weeks. All in good condition, reasonably priced. Tel: (01904) 766756 (York).

ELAP ROTATING CAR seat, passenger side, double sliding, to fit Volvo 440. £300. Tel: 0121-705 9117.

DAIHATSU HIJET MPV. P reg, Universal Mobility conversion, 3 seats, wheelchair straps and winch, ramp, stereo, alarmed. 5k miles, excellent condition. £6,200. Tel: (01923) 771146 (Herts).

FORD POP TRANSIT van. G reg, MOT, tail lift and fittings for wheelchair passenger. Good condition, £1,750 ono. Tel: (01995) 606685 or (01995) 605451 (Preston).

FORD ESCORT FITTED with Constables carchair on the passenger side. Auto, 16v, 2-door, power steering, 8k miles. Under

Holidays

CAREFREE HOLIDAYS IN FRANCE & SPAIN
Summers in France, winters in Spain
Time to relax and forget about rain
Fully wheelchair accessible accommodation
Minibus for transfers and daily excursions
Good home cooking and complementary wine with meals
For brochure on French & Spanish holidays contact Pat & John Bartlam,
40 Rue St Eloi, 79440 Courlay, France.
Tel/Fax: 00335 49722537

VACANCIES JULY AND AUGUST

GRANGE COURT HOLIDAY VILLAGE:
Park with "good" status, Goodrington Sands, Devon. Excellent site facilities within short walk, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, 2 bedroom, fully wheelchair accessible mobile home. Sleeps 4-6, well appointed. Free club membership. (Purchased with funds from the National Lottery).

MILDENREATH HOLIDAY VILLAGE:
Excellent seaside site with good facilities, just outside Looe in Cornwall. Restaurant, clubhouse, indoor pool. Fully equipped and wheelchair accessible 2 bedroom chalet accommodation. Sleeps 6 - well furnished and comfortable. Free club membership.

Details: Mr P Cash, tel: (01425) 672055
Bournemouth Spina Bifida Association.
Registered Charity No. 261914.

TRURO, CORNWALL

Quality detached bungalow:
2 private acres, sleeps 6, good
wheelchair access, level access
shower. Ideal stress free break.
01872 277983

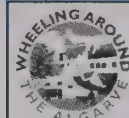
3 years old. As good as new, £10,900
ono. Tel: 0171-266 0212 (London).

FORD TRANSIT, E REG. 2 litre, petrol, 100k miles, automatic, hand controls, power steering. Tail lift, wheelchair clamps, side windows, MOT to March 2000. DIY fitted for camping. £990 ono. Tel: 0181-422 3183 (Northwest London).

NISSAN SERENA SLX. Diesel, M reg, Nov' 1994. One lady owner. Power steering, twin sunroofs, central locking. £5,000 wheelchair conversion by Brotherwood. 34k miles, fsh. £9,000 ono. Call Pat, tel: (01895) 638759 (Ruislip).

NISSAN SERENA, N REG. Low mileage, very reliable, in vgc. Holds 6 people or 4 plus 2 wheelchairs. Brotherwood conversion. £15,000 ono. Tel: (01865) 775465.

CHAIRMAN ESCORT ELITE. F reg, white, 1.6, diesel. Rear ramped access, hydraulic suspension. £2,500 ono. Tel: (01495) 312582.



Self Catering villas and cottages, hotels, B&B, car hire with hand controls, adapted vans, etc. Scuba Diving courses and other sporting and leisure facilities.
David Player, Wheeling Around The Algarve
Tel: 00 351 89 393636 Fax: 00 351 89 397448
E-mail: dave@player.pt Website: http://www.player.pt

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including indoor heated pool. Take-away meals delivered and equipment loan available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.
For colour brochure please contact:
Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm, Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF.
Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

HOLIDAY COTTAGE SOUTH WEST WALES

Swn y Gwynt (Sound of the Wind).
5 dragon WTB rating.
Grade 1 access rating

Built specifically for people with disabilities. Suit up to 4 people, including two in wheelchairs. Great views; good touring centre; easy parking. Reasonable inclusive rates. As good a place as you'll find anywhere.
Telephone Grew on 01267 237261

ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL NEAR NORWICH, NORFOLK

Beautiful Elizabethan manor house in 11 acres of natural grounds. Wheelchair accessible throughout. Electric hoists etc. Minibus. Call 01508 489324 for Aug/Sept Special

Strefford, Shropshire, nr. Ludlow

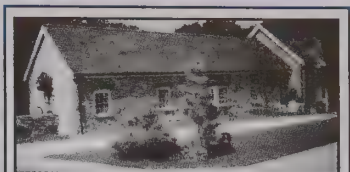
at foot of Wenlock Edge. Two comfortable self-catering coachhouse apartments. Each sleeps 2. Ground floor apartment is wheelchair accessible.
Tel/Fax: (01588) 672383

DRUMDELGIE HOUSE AND COTTAGES

By Huntly in beautiful Grampian. Superb views over Strathgogie on both castle and whisky trails. One cottage fully adapted for wheelchair use. Serviced or self-catering. Eve meals, licensed. Scottish Tourist Board 3 Star. Brochure (01466) 760368.

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"

Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.
Please ring or write for colour brochure.
R&N Hall, Penrose Burden, St Brevard, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin (01208) 850277 or 850617



5 Star self catering cottages on animal park in North Wales. Fully wheelchair accessible with all services for disabled people, 2 miles from the beach. Three quarters hour drive from Snowdonia National Park. 01407 711433.

JUBILEE LODGE - Essex

Purpose built holiday centre. Epping Forest, Cambridge. Southend nearby. 26 single en-suite rooms, 5 twin rooms. CTV. Motorized hoists. Bar. Conservatory. Coffee lounge. Visits/entertainment included. Help buttons. Nurses/volunteer support. Social Services registered. From £255 pw. For brochure call: 0171 833 4579 ext. 132

Near Salisbury - newly converted stable block self-catering units.

Ground floor 1 double/twin bedroom en-suite wheel-in shower. Upstairs 1 double, 1 single. Open plan kitchen & living room. Patio & shared garden. Aiming for Cat. 2 ETB. Non-smoking. Prices from £195 pw. Available all year. Opens Dec' 1999. **01722 328954**

LLLETY MIERI LLANDEILO, WEST WALES

3 charming award-winning cottages, designed for wheelchair users and their families. Peaceful rural location overlooked by Dinelw Castle. Each warm and well equipped cottage sleeps 4. Extensive grounds and games room. Open all year. Short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558 823 059) for brochure.

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details C. Hodgson.

Tel (01924) 454300.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE

Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you.
Book now for 1999.
For more information tel: 0181 885 4971 evenings.

YEW TREE PARK Canterbury, Cat. 2

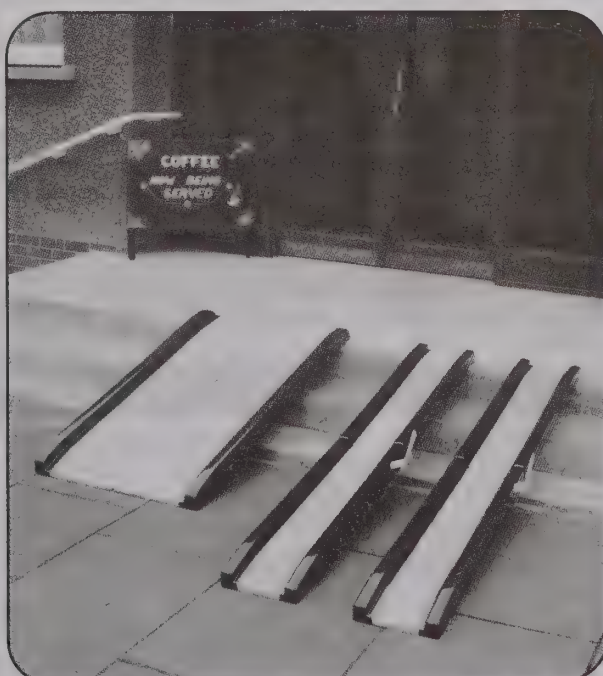
1, 2 or 3 bedroom chalet situated in area of outstanding natural beauty. Large outdoor pool. Tel/Fax: 01227 700306

"Holidays for You and Me"

Specially selected for disabled people, self-catering properties within the UK and Southern Ireland. Majority Tourist Board graded. Individually inspected. Details from Sian, Bank House, Castlemorris, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA62 5EW. Tel: 01348 841000.

Continued on page 32

ACCESS EASER



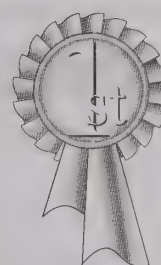
Get out and about this summer with Access Easer

- Portable folding ramps sold direct from the factory
- Colour coded and custom made for you

Telephone or write for further information

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glassfibre

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Ballymoney
Co. Antrim BT53 6LG
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Fax: 01265 667044



A FIRST FOR BRITAIN!

50 stones down to 5 stones carrying capacity.

THE ALDERSLEY EXCEL

Fully tested at Blackpool Wheelchair Evaluation Centre.

ALDERSLEY POWERCHAIRS
aren't just for cheeky youngsters! They are also made for slightly more sophisticated adults too - up to 50 stones carrying capacity if required!

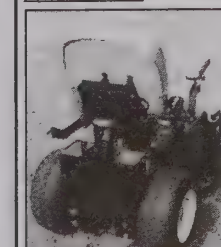


ALL CHAIRS HAVE SUSPENSION FOR COMFORT AND CAN BE CUSTOMISED TO SUIT THE INDIVIDUAL CLIENT.

Only available direct from:

ALDERSLEY BATTERY CHAIRS LIMITED
New Cross Street,
Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 7ST

For further details and/or free assessment
Tel: 0121 568 8999
Fax: 0121 568 8868



Please send details of Excel Range DN 7/99

Name.....
Address.....
.....Post Code.....
Tel.....
The weight of the person interested is.....stones or.....kgs

• Courses



Summer sun?

Are you a disabled person with some experience of drama, music or dance?
Would you rather be performing this summer?

Performance is a new course run by North West Disability Arts Forum (NWDAF) in partnership with Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT). There will be two weeks of intensive performance skills training accredited by the GMOCF.

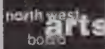
This is a free course, infused with the social model of disability, specially designed for and by disabled people and ending with a celebratory multi-disciplinary performance.

The course is full-time over the two week period 16-27 August at MANCAT's - central Manchester - Lever Street building. All access requirements will be met - we will pay for sign language interpreters, personal assistants and any other support that you need.

Details, application forms and enquiries to: Mickey Fellows, NWDAF, 2a Franceys Street, Liverpool L3 5YQ.
Tel/M'com: 0151-707 1733, Fax: 0151-708 9355,
E-mail: mickey@nwdaf.mersinet.co.uk

Closing date for applications is Friday 30 July.

Supported by The Adult & Community Learning Fund of the DfEE.
North West Arts Board



KINGSTON UNIVERSITY AND ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

FACULTY OF HEALTHCARE SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR CAREER PROSPECTS?

Why not find out more about our flexible, **part time MA** programmes in:

- Child Protection
- Criminal Justice
- Therapeutic Methods
- Community Care Management
- Social Work Education and Training

Our courses are aimed at professionals working at an advanced practice level in the social and community care, health and criminal justice sectors. Qualified Social Workers can incorporate the Advanced Award in Social Work.

The next intake for these courses is September 1999.

We also provide short courses in Child Protection, Practice Teaching, Inspection, Mentoring and Specialist Law.



St George's Hospital
Medical School
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

For further information please telephone the MA Course Administrator, Sara Frazer-Mann on 0181 547 7013 or write to: School of Social Work, Faculty of Healthcare Sciences, Kingston Hill, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, KT2 7LB.

• Personal

Home Help

The Samaritans
0345 90 90 90



For disabled people - able bodied welcome

Tel: 01473 226950
Fax: 01473 254030

New era, new logo, 50 weddings on. To find out more about Handdate write, phone, fax or e-mail:

Freeport, Handdate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich IP1 2BR
E-mail: handdate@btinternet.com
A member of ABIA

• Property for sale

Hundon - South Suffolk

Semi-detached bungalow, 2 beds, lounge/diner, gardens, garage, adapted for wheelchair use. (C5/C6). £66,500. Call *Just Bungalows* for further details on this or other bungalows.

01284 725454



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Anybody - Any Age - Anywhere
Able-bodied or Disabled
Choose Your Own Ideal Relationship

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SHOREFIELD COUNTRY PARK
Downton, Hampshire:

Award winning coastal site with indoor/outdoor pools; sports/leisure facilities; restaurants and bars. Wheelchair accessible, fully equipped 1/2 bedroom chalets, sleep 4-6.

Call: K. Pepper on 01590 642866

New Forest Mencap Charity No. 1038962.

• Recruitment (also on pages 33, 34 & 35)



If you have experience in the roles below we invite you to register with our new internal recruitment agency, BBC Talent, so that we can contact you if suitable vacancies occur.

Broadcast Assistants

As a Broadcast Assistant you could work almost anywhere in the BBC - from local radio or regional TV to national news or drama production.. Whatever the job, you will play a vital role in supporting the programme-making team in radio, television or online. The range of responsibilities is just as varied - administration, operational and technical support, research - you name it!

If you have a passion for all that is media, excellent communication skills and an the ability to juggle priorities under pressure then we could have the job for you. However our standards are high. We need evidence of hands-on experience of radio or television production processes which might include skills as wide ranging as arranging an interview to basic recording and editing. Depending on the vacancy, a keen interest in a particular area or specialist subject such as music, entertainment, sport or news and current affairs could also be required. You will also need up to the minute IT skills, resilience and personal confidence.

So if you think you've got what it takes to be a Broadcast Assistant in the BBC and would like to find out more, please get in touch with us. Ref: 40847/DI

Researchers

The range of programmes is AMAZING.....from **Watchdog** to **Songs of Praise**, **Steve Wright's Saturday Show** to **Home Front**, the **Today** programme to **Blue Peter**.

The BBC offers a wealth of opportunities across many genres for experienced researchers, in television, radio, print journalism or online.

Our standards are rigorous, so we will be looking for a strongly developed set of skills and plenty of experience.

You will need:

- tons of ideas
- at least 6 months media research experience
- proven ability to identify, investigate and check stories
- proven ability to do in-depth research, ensuring complete accuracy

- persistence to ensure your ideas and treatments are delivered to strict deadlines
- up-to-the-minute technical skills for a variety of media, i.e. television, radio, online
- tenacity, resourcefulness and organisational ability
- plenty of team working experience and an extensive contact base

You must also be able to convince us that you can embrace new technologies and will never lose sight of the need for absolute accuracy and quality in the programmes we produce.

If you have all these skills and experience (and more!) we would like to hear from you.

Ref: 40856/DI

Good PAs...
Have We Got Jobs for You!

From programme making to policy development, sales & marketing to legal affairs, the chances to be a part of exciting developments at the BBC are endless. If you have excellent skills, energy, enthusiasm and drive you can really make your mark in an environment that's driven by consistently high quality.

As a PA to one of our senior managers, you'll prioritise a busy workload, managing hectic diaries, organising meetings and co-ordinating events. You'll be the first point of contact for all enquiries, develop and maintain systems and manage the day-to-day running of the office.

You'll be an experienced secretary, used to a constant juggling of workload and priorities, often under time pressure. MS Office skills are essential, and your interpersonal skills will be of the highest calibre. You'll be proactive, think creatively about the ways you work and take a sensitive and intelligent approach to confidential situations.

Ref: 40845/DI



Working for equality of opportunity

If you would like to find out more about Broadcast Assistant, Researcher, or PA positions with the BBC and how to register on our new candidate database, you can visit our website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs/bbctalent> (online applications are particularly welcome.) Alternatively, email us at onlinetalent@bbc.co.uk, write to BBC Talent, PO Box 10670, London W12 8GN or telephone 0181 740 0005. Text phone: 0181 225 9878. Please quote the appropriate reference when you contact us.

• Holidays

ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL

Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year.

Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2. Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.



WYE VALLEY Specialising in Holidays for Disabled People

Glorious valley & river views, 3 acre gardens, 3 lounges & conservatory. T.V./Radio all rooms. Menu choices. Physio, hairdresser.

MINIBUS OUTINGS TO TINTERN, SYMOND'S YAT ETC. - TAKES WHEELCHAIRS - CAN ALSO COLLECT/RETURN TO YOUR HOME.

Activities, entertainments. Rates from £235/week. (01594) 530581 for brochure etc.

The Priory Res. Home, nr Tintern NP5 4TP

Norfolk, Nar Valley
Holiday Cottages

3 self-catering, all wheelchair accessible, 1 with wheel-in shower room, 2 with airbaths. Mostly en-suite. On working farm - peaceful location, central for beaches and tourist attractions. Indoor heated swimming pool now being built.

More details and prices, contact: Rosemary on 01760 338797.



Reg. Charity No. 286650

BREAK

Holidays & Respite Care
for children, adults and families
with special needs.

Two centres on the Norfolk coast.

Wide range of activities & outings.

Contact Judith Davison - 01263 823170

EILDON HOLIDAY COTTAGES
MELROSE, SCOTTISH BORDERS

HOLIDAY CARE SERVICE UK WINNER
Five category 1 self-catering holiday cottages in magnificent setting overlooking Tweed valley.

Two cottages have overhead hoists

Scottish Tourist Board 4 stars.

For colour brochure please contact:

JILL HART, DINGLETON MAINS,

MELROSE TD6 9HS

TEL/FAX 01896 823258

<http://www.aboutscotland.co.uk/eildon/cottages.html>

• Recruitment (also on pages 32, 34 & 35)

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

an organisation of disabled people committed to the principle of equality of opportunity for all people, wish to recruit disabled people to the following posts:

Co-ordinator, full-time, NLCB funded until June 2002
35 hours pw, SO2 SCP 32-34, £20,355 - £21,549
Applicants will have a thorough knowledge of disability issues and the Social Model of Disability. You will be responsible for strategic development, staff/project management and peer support. Excellent interpersonal, budget management and organisational skills, together with the ability to communicate at all levels are essential qualities.

Direct Payments Support Worker, Central Hampshire
Fixed contract until 31 March 2000
24.5 hours pw, SCP 26, £16,719 pro rata.
Applicants will have direct experience of self-operated personal assistance packages to provide peer support to existing and potential Direct Payments recipients, working with Hampshire Social Services.

Closing date for applications is 16 July 1999.
For application packs contact SCIL, 6 Northlands Road, Southampton SO15 2LF. Tel: (01703) 330982, minicom: (01703) 635167, fax: (01703) 225060.

DISABILITY INFORMATION ADVICE LINE

Dial Mansfield and District wish to recruit a Co-ordinator to lead a well-established organisation which provides impartial information and advice on all aspects of disability to disabled people and carers.

The person we seek will have experience of:

- managing a frontline service.
- the development and implementation of organisational policies, strategic planning, staff appraisals and evaluation procedure.
- disabilities and current disability issues.
- leading teams of paid and unpaid staff.
- marketing, funding and public relations.

The salary scale will be NJC SO1 (£18,006-£19,194pa) for a 37 hour week and a three year fixed-term contract will be offered. The position is jointly funded by NCC and NLCB.

Closing dates for application is 23 July.
Interviews will be held on 11 August and the post is available as of 1 September 1999.

Please apply to DIAL for information. Application forms are available in all formats.

Disability Information Advice Line, 1 Byron Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 5NX. Telephone: 01623 658060, minicom: 01623 625891, fax: 01623 427753.

Dial Mansfield is an equal opportunities employer. Disabled people who meet the essential criteria will be guaranteed an interview. As people from minority ethnic community groups are under-represented we actively welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Dial is supported by Nottinghamshire County Council and National Lottery Charities Board.

• Holidays

ORANGE BADGE MACHINE S.L.

Wheelchair Hire
Manual & Electric Chairs
Electronic Scooters • Walking Aids
Bathroom & Toilet Aids
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Arona, Tenerife

TEL/FAX: (0034) 922 797355
E-mail us at orange@interbook.net

• For sale

Cheat on toner

Refill your empty toner with the "Cut & Pour" method. Save ££££s. Doesn't disturb the inner workings of your cartridge. Starter kits and bottles of toner for Hewlett Packard, Canon, Lexmark, Xerox and many more.

For FREE catalogue, FREE phone
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FREE fax 0800 376 9955
http://www.refilltoner.com

Ex-demo vehicle for sale. 1993 K reg, Braun rear hydraulic lift, 54" raised door kit, tie downs, hi-spec. £15,995.

Team Traction
01227 472095
www.teamtraction.co.uk

FUNDRAISER
Salary circa £19,000pa inc. ILW

WE WILL POSITIVELY WELCOME APPLICATIONS FROM DISABLED PEOPLE FOR THIS POST

The Disabled Living Foundation is a national charity working for freedom, empowerment and choice for disabled people and others who use equipment or technology to enhance their independence.

An exciting opportunity has arisen for someone with a successful track record in fundraising or related field to join this leading national charity.

The successful candidate must have excellent written skills, be computer literate and be capable of producing quality applications to Trusts.

For an information pack and application form please contact:
Gloria Hill, DLF, 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU.
Tel: 0171 289 6111, fax: 0171 266 2922, e-mail: gloriah@dlf.org.uk, www.dlf.org.uk
Closing date: 9 July 1999

Working towards equality of opportunities

THE GREATER MANCHESTER COALITION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

INFORMATION WORKER

NJC scale 6, £16,719 pro rata - 25 hours pw, £11,942 actual

GMCDP are seeking a part-time Information Worker with knowledge of the Disabled People's Movement and disability issues. The successful candidate would need to be able to develop and maintain the extensive information base of GMCDP, and make appropriate information available to members and outside bodies through the production of a monthly Information Bulletin, direct contact and telephone or written enquiries. The post will also involve work around production of "Coalition" magazine and developing the information/publications project within GMCDP.

Requests by phone will not be accepted, please send for information stating if Braille, tape, large print or other format is required, to: GMCDP, Carisbrooke, Wenlock Way, Gorton, Manchester M12 5LF.

Please note: Previous applicants need not re-apply.

Closing date for applications is 1pm, 4 August 1999
Interviews week commencing 16 August 1999.

Please do not send a CV. Only disabled people need apply

• Contract and tenders

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR A SERVICE TO: PROCURE, STORE, DELIVER, INSTALL, MAINTAIN, COLLECT, CLEAN AND RECYCLE DAILY LIVING EQUIPMENT AND EQUIPMENT FOR SENSORY IMPAIRMENT; TO SERVICE HOISTS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT; AND TO CARRY OUT MINOR ADAPTATIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO PROPERTY.

North Yorkshire County Council, City of York Council, Airedale NHS Trust, Harrogate Health Care NHS Trust, Northallerton Health Services NHS Trust, Scarborough and North East Yorkshire Healthcare Trust and York Health Services NHS Trust invite tenders for the provision of the above service. It is intended that the Contract will be for three years, commencing on 1 April 2000, with an option to extend for a further two years.

Applications are invited from suitable organisations. Applications will need to demonstrate their competence to manage and provide the required service, their quality management procedures and their experience of providing similar services. Full details, including the award criteria, are included in the tender pack. There is a charge of £100 for the pack.

Requests for the tender pack should be made in writing before 18 August 1999 to: Jean Johnson, Unit Manager (Contracting), Social Services Directorate, North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8DD, enclosing a cheque for £100 made payable to "North Yorkshire County Council".

The deadline for receipt of tenders is noon on 25 August 1999.

Employment Service

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Employment Service is looking for organisations with practical ideas to help us develop new approaches, good practices and national policy for the Supported Employment Programme. We want to test ways of working with disabled people in supported employment to ensure that those who can, progress to mainstream employment. We will do this through a small number of projects across England, Scotland and Wales. Project proposals focusing on person and job profiling, workplace support and quality standards are of particular interest - more details will be included in the Development Initiative information pack.

If you feel your organisation has the expertise to develop these ideas, call Ann Jepson or Julie Bell on 0114 259 5737/ 6964 (fax: 0114 259 6990, or text phone: 0114 273 8724) for an information pack, or write to the address below. The pack includes an invitation to tender and additional information to assist you in developing a proposal. The closing date for receipt of tenders is 25 August 1999.

Employment Service
Jobseeker Disability Services Division (JDS4)
Level 3
Rockingham House
123 West Street
Sheffield
S1 4ER

• For sale

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ARE YOU HAVING PROBLEMS LOCATING THE USED VEHICLE YOU NEED OR DISPOSING OF YOUR EXISTING VEHICLE?

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New and Nearly New, Electric Wheelchairs, 3 and 4 Wheel Scooters.
All models wanted and for sale.
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WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

Selection of one owner, low mileage, available from £5,250 - £7,500
Details (01634) 243596

STAIRLIFTS
Reconditioned stairlifts fitted from £850. Guaranteed.
For details call 01323 508 006

Continued on page 34

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

• Awareness day

DISABILITY AWARENESS FAMILY FUN DAY
 Sunday 18 July 1999
 Walton Gardens, Warrington, Cheshire
 (off A56), 10.30am - 5.30pm
 Over 200 voluntary organisations, statutory services, businesses with ideas for independent living, sports competitions, arts, drama, dance, sponsored walk/push, all accessible amenities, family/children's entertainment, free wheelchair loan, and enabling service.
 For more information contact
 Cynthia Cowan 01925 240852
 Warrington Disability Information Service

• Services

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 Do you need an extra pair of hands around the house?

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For a free no obligation, no commitment assessment of your needs, ring AGES on
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Why throw it away when we can repair it?

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Robson & Francis Rewinds
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 London SW9 8DH
 Tel: 0171-733 2353

DN is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

• Recruitment (also on pages 32, 33 & 35)

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

HOME SUPPORT SERVICE MANAGER

£31,800 to £33,798 pa inc
 Reference number: 10/731/W2

Our staff are our greatest asset.

Camden's Home Support Service, which includes the Home Care Service and specialist Peripatetic team provide quality services to over 1000 Camden residents each week. This service needs a Manager who can make sure we invest in our staff and deliver quality services.

Camden's Best Value strategy challenges the in house service to build on its success, developing staff, increasing flexibility and helping to create integrated domiciliary services.

Camden is a diverse community with complex needs; the postholder will need to continue to shape a service to meet these needs.

The successful candidate will need extensive experience of Managing domiciliary services at a senior level. Skills in managing financial and human resources will be essential. Experience of managing change and developing service will also be required.

Interviews: 3rd August 1999.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

£26,376 to £28,482 pa inc
 Reference number: 10/ 732/W2

Your sound knowledge of national developments in the field of social care will assist you in the development, design, co-ordination and production of policy, procedures and information to assist the Domiciliary Support Services.

You will have a full range of project management skills and be able to communicate to a wide range of different audiences and carry out research independently.

Interview date: 6th August 1999

The division is committed to making sure that staff are appropriately skilled for the challenges ahead. Relevant training and the professional development of each of these staff members will be seen as a priority.

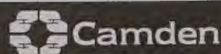
All applicants must be able to demonstrate the ability to work independently. Your strong leadership skills will ensure that new developments are accepted and understood throughout the administrative structure of the division.

We place considerable emphasis on the importance of valuing the rich diversity among the residents and workforce of Camden and successful applicants for all three positions will provide evidence of their commitment to working within an anti - discriminatory and equitable environment.

Camden values the diversity of its community and aims to have a workforce which reflects this. We therefore encourage applications from all sections of the community.

To receive further information and an application form please telephone the Social Services recruitment line (24 hours) on 0171 860 5892, Minicom 0171 860 5859, or write to Camden Advertising, Room 314, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE.

Please quote the appropriate reference number.
 Closing date for both vacancies: Monday, 19th July



• For sale

Disabled? Struggling to keep the weight off?
Maybe I can help.
 Call Zo: (01255) 430800

U.S. VANS ARE BETTER DEALS

VanFare, USA is a tetraplegic owned company specialising in new and previously owned adapted mini or full size vans for disabled driver, passenger or group transport.
 Contact: VanFare, USA 11 School St., Essex, MA 01929 USA
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 Fax: 001 978 768 6404
 E-mail: vanfare@tiac.net
 http://www.tiac.net/users/vanfare

BECOME PART OF A GROWING CONCERN

As well as priding ourselves on being one of the UK's largest and most successful House and Garden Centre retailers, we are also proud of our reputation for being a progressive and forward-thinking company. Part of this culture includes a comprehensive equal opportunities policy throughout our entire organisation.

We can offer a range of recruitment opportunities either within any one of our 300 stores UK-wide or behind the scenes at our head office based in Wallington, Surrey.

We're looking for enthusiastic people with a good standard of education, ideally with previous experience in a retail or service environment. Above all you must have outstanding customer service skills.

Benefits include staff discount, profit sharing and SAYE schemes.

To find out more about the opportunities we can offer you, please contact Resourcing Services, Homebase Limited, Beddington House, Wallington, Surrey SM6 0HB.

Homebase is an equal opportunities employer.



SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION

- Income up
- Admin costs down
- More services delivered
- Membership up
- More publications
- Enquiries up
- Increased profile
- Ground breaking research

Can you keep the momentum going?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Spinal Injuries Association is the Association for spinal cord injured people, and everyone interested in our welfare and well-being. After four years, the current Executive Director, Peter Mansell, is moving on and our Trustees are seeking to fill his boots!

What's needed?

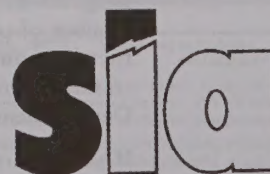
Candidates with great line management, personnel, income generation and financial skills. A good ambassador who can work with a diverse range of stakeholders and a leader who can motivate his/her staff team to even better things. If this is you, let us hear from you.

What's on offer?

A pleasant working environment in leafy Muswell Hill, North London. A negotiable salary (but not less than £30,000), pension scheme, generous annual leave and the inheritance of committed staff and Trustees.

What's the Timescale?

Deadline for completed applications: 21 July 1999
 Shortlisting: 22 July 1999
 Interviews: 5 August 1999
 Appointment (subject to references): 6 August 1999.



Want to know more?

Contact Mary Ann Tyrrell, Head of Personnel and Administration, for job information on 0208 444 2121 ext. 234, or write to her at SIA, 76 St James's Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 3DF.

UNISTOW - THE ULTIMATE IN FOLDAWAY PAVEMENT SCOOTER TRANSPORTATION

- Has unique trailing wheel assembly fitted with high speed capacity tyre.
- Take scooters and wheelchairs upto 100Kgs/220lbs.
- Easily loaded by integral non-slip ramps.
- Folds up onto back of vehicle to allow normal parking in car parks and garages.
- Easily manoeuvrable due to single trailing wheel.
- Supplied with regulation lights and number plate holder.
- Tie down ratchet straps supplied.



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Tower Products, tel: 01449 766977

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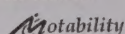
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- Wheelchair/Scooter hoists
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We Design And Build Any Cot or Bed You Need.

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 Extra Large Stairgates.
 Fitted Padded Play Areas.

High Quality Fair prices
 Information Phone 01993 842885

• Recruitment (also on pages 34, 33 & 32)

WORKING FOR BARNET*delivering high quality services***HELP***promoting a thriving local economy***US MAKE***creating a safe environment***A GOOD***achieving real value for money***JOB OF IT***providing open government*

Take a closer look and you will see that Barnet has set itself a challenging agenda. These are the things Barnet believes in and we are always looking for staff with the skills and abilities to help us achieve them.

Barnet is conveniently situated to the north of central London, within easy travelling distance of its neighbours, and comprises an attractive mix of urban and semi-rural landscape.

This is one of London's largest boroughs and we employ a great many people in a wide range of careers. We place a special emphasis on providing good terms and conditions, on staff welfare, training and equality of opportunity.

You too can make a good job of working for Barnet.

Our Community Services Directorate is currently advertising vacancies for social workers, care staff and administrators. New employment opportunities are advertised on a weekly basis and a full current vacancy list is available now from: Maureen Topping, HR Strategy Unit, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BG.

*treating people equally*

The business of building bridges, breaking down walls, building up people...

South Northants Area

Access Officer
(Part-time 18.5 hours per week)
£16,000 - £16,700 pro rata

Will this stairway give me a helping handrail? Can this door open itself to me courteously? Could this pathway send me in the right direction? These are the sort of questions disabled people ask themselves. And, if you're asking the same questions, we could have the right challenge for you.

In this new and important role, you will not only have the personal scope to shape the physical environment, but change attitudes and approaches too. Because we will rely on you to identify, promote, and obtain access to work, services, and facilities in both town and country. And you will be responsible for driving policy by developing and monitoring the Council's own Access to Services Strategy, and monitoring our own employment policies in this respect.

It's an unusual, highly progressive brief - so you will need to bring some distinctive qualities. On top of a natural empathy for the needs of the physically and sensory impaired, you will bring a working knowledge of buildings and structural plans. Most important, though, is the capacity to influence people and events positively, and be flexible in approach to committee work. A working knowledge of the latest regulations would be advantageous, but training is readily available as is our full technical support.

If you relish the opportunity to improve the quality of life for others, speak to us soon.

To apply please telephone (01327) 322296 or write to the Environmental Health Department at South Northamptonshire Council, Springfield, Towcester, Northants NN12 6AE.

Closing date: 16 July 1999.

We operate a no smoking policy

South Northamptonshire Council

Committed to equal opportunities



Deadlines for the August issue of Disability Now:

Booking deadline is 9 July

Copy deadline is 13 July

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

The Natural History Museum is one of the UK's leading visitor attractions and also a research institution. With over 1,800,000 visitors a year, it is recognised internationally as one of the finest and most innovative museums in the world.

An organisation with the Museum's diversity of function and level of interaction with the public needs to regularly review and improve its provision for disability access. To achieve this the Department of Visitor Services has created the new post of Disability Policy Co-ordinator.

DISABILITY POLICY CO-ORDINATOR

2 Year Fixed Term Appointment
Part time 3 days per week

Salary £15,277 per annum
(based on a full time salary of £25,000)

You will advise on and evaluate the Museum's measures aimed at enabling access for people with disabilities to the Museum's collections, exhibitions, public programmes, other services and employment; and to co-ordinate the programme of work by Departments to implement Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act.

You should have substantial experience of developing access for people with disabilities at a high volume people business, plus first hand experience of the needs of people with disabilities (possibly based on personal experience, or working with/caring for or representing people with disabilities). Detailed familiarity with the Disability Discrimination Act and relevant codes of practice is also essential, together with knowledge of sources of expertise and guidance relevant to meeting the needs of people with disabilities. You should be familiar with public sector procurement procedures and have experience of managing projects and budgets.

Benefits include a generous annual leave allowance and a non-contributory pension.

For further information and details of how to apply please send an A4 stamped addressed envelope to: Pauline Mohabir, Personnel Section, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 13 July 1999.



The Natural History Museum
is working towards
Equal Opportunities.



Kingston Association of Disabled People (KADP) Development Director



Salary: PO1 point 37, £23,823 inc. OLV for 35 hours per week (Funded initially for three years)

KADP is a well established organisation of disabled people. A grant from the National Lottery Charities Board brings an exciting opportunity to develop a Centre for Independent Living in Kingston.

The successful applicant will be a disabled person with: excellent skills in leading a dedicated team of staff and volunteers a sound knowledge of current disability legislation a strong commitment to Independent Living and the Social Model an understanding of the voluntary, statutory and health sectors good communication skills experience of fundraising

If you feel you have the enthusiasm and commitment to meet this varied and challenging role, KADP would like to hear from you.

We offer a supportive team environment working from accessible premises.

Closing date for applications: 16 July 1999
Interviews will be held 26 & 27 July 1999

KADP is an equal opportunities employer

Further details and an application pack, in print, large print, Braille or on tape, are available by contacting:

KADP, Siddeley House, 50 Canbury Park Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 6LX.

Tel: 0181 255 2444 (voice & minicom), fax: 0181 255 2441, e-mail kingstonadp@cableinet.co.uk



DIRECTOR

Salary: £19,770 - £23,895



On its 21st anniversary, East Midlands Shape is looking for a suitably qualified disabled person to lead this dynamic and successful arts organisation in the next phase of its development.

EM Shape has an excellent regional, national and international reputation for the quality of its work in the arts with disabled people. We are looking for someone with drive, energy and commitment to continue this work.

The post will be based at our Nottingham office but will cover the whole region.

If you have the qualities to lead a skilled and enthusiastic team please contact Nicola Roberts for further details and an application form (available from the beginning of July).

East Midlands Shape, Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre, 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FB. Tel: 0115-934 8460, Fax: 0115-934 8461.

DisabilityNow

£1.60 July 1999

The award winning newspaper for everyone with an interest in disability

Posters panned

Campaigners are critical of the Government's new bid to raise disability awareness. *See page 1.*

Making waves: James Crisp broke two world records and gave Britain's best performance in the BT Swimming National Open Championships, just one day before he sat his GCSEs. *See page 11.*



GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

Win!

- * A Chairman Kangoo, worth £15k, for a year
- * A £2k Landeez wheelchair
- * £100 in our crossword



DEALS ON WHEELS

Read DN's 12-page motoring supplement



FUN IN THE SUN

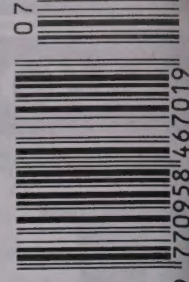
Three pages of days out for all the family

Jobs
pages 32-35
and on our
website

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Transport Research Laboratory
Crowthorne, Berkshire
25, 26, 27 June 1999
Stand E27 - E34

